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JOHN WYCLIFFE.*

The life, character and labours of John Wycliffe well deserve the most careful study of his countrymen, and the better they are understood, the stronger will his claims appear to their gratitude and admiration. It may not be strictly true, perhaps, that Christendom owes *more* to this remarkable man than to any name in the list of the Reformers;† but he was unquestionably one by whom Divine Providence was pleased very greatly to help forward the cause of religious progress and of human improvement. He generously toiled for the good of future ages; but he was also especially adapted to the times in which he lived, and able to speak and act in a manner suitable to the urgent wants of his own generation. Nearly a century and a half before the voice of Luther was heard denouncing the errors and superstitions of the Romish Church, the Papal antipathies of Wycliffe had been manifested, and his quickening thoughts and stirring words fell with wonderful power on the minds and hearts of men, and gave a new impulse to the religious life of England, whose influence is felt to the present hour. It is impossible to reflect with candour and seriousness on what he was and on what he did, without feeling that he was marvellously in advance of the period in which his lot was cast, a fearless investigator of sacred truth, and one who was anxious to unfold, for the benefit of others, those treasures of divine knowledge and wisdom the value of which he had himself discovered. There was about him a noble independence of spirit, and an uncompromising fidelity to duty. He left deep traces of good, and is one of those whose purposes and achievements on behalf of his race deserve to be recorded for public remembrance.

The story of Wycliffe's‡ eventful career is related in the volume

* John de Wycliffe, D.D. A Monograph, with some Account of the Wycliffe MSS. in Oxford, Cambridge, the British Museum, Lambeth Palace, and Trinity College, Dublin. By Robert Vaughan, D.D. Seeleys, Fleet Street and Hanover Street, London. 1853.

† The Rev. W. Gilpin, in his Lives of Reformers, observes that the cause of pure religion is under greater obligation to Wycliffe than to any of the Reformers.

‡ The name of the Reformer has been spelt in many different ways. We have followed the form adopted by Dr. Vaughan, regarding him as the highest authority on this point.

before us in a manner which can hardly fail to interest the reader in the man and in his work. Very refreshing is it to peruse a volume prepared with such evident marks of care, and exhibiting on every page a thorough acquaintance with the history and teachings of the great English Reformer. This is not the first time that Dr. Vaughan has appeared as the biographer of the venerable rector of Lutterworth. Twenty-five years ago, he published a work on the Life and Opinions of Wycliffe, which was received in this country with much favour, and which has been highly approved by some of the first continental scholars. Nothing so complete and satisfactory, indeed, had been previously written on the subject, and the value of his labours has been frequently acknowledged by those who have since directed their thoughts to the rise and progress of the Reformation in this country. The memory of Wycliffe is evidently regarded by Dr. Vaughan with a warm affection, as well as profound veneration. With increased experience, and the advantage of further research, he has re-cast his materials and re-written his book, hoping, as he tells us, to afford a more perfect illustration of the character and doctrines of one that must ever occupy a prominent place amongst the wise and good who, whether in eloquent speech or in glorious action, have advanced the cause of truth and freedom;—one to whom, under God, Britain is indebted for the honour of being foremost in the contest with Rome,* and of proclaiming and defending those important principles involved in the supremacy and sufficiency of scripture and the right of private judgment, which are destined to accomplish still greater victories for pure religion and the highest interests of humanity, than the world has ever yet witnessed. We think that Dr. Vaughan has been most successful in his object. His theological views and sympathies are in many respects different from those which we cherish; but this does not prevent us from acknowledging our obligations to his industry, learning and ability in the Monograph † on Wycliffe, nor from heartily sympathizing in his desire to make the worth and excellence of the Reformer better known and more truly appreciated. Never before has so accurate a portrait of him been drawn, nor so full and faithful a description given of the circumstances in which he was placed, and the difficulties with which he had to contend. We have seen nothing from the pen of Dr. Vaughan that in point of literary merit can be compared with this production. Its style is clear, dignified and attractive; and there are passages in it which, in our judgment, furnish evidence of power of a higher kind than its author has displayed in any other of his numerous

* D'Aubigné's Reformation in the 16th Century, Vol. IV. p. 107.

† The form of literary production with which, under the name of Monograph, we are now becoming familiar, would seem to be something between the old biographical memoir and the historical essay.

publications. We have read the work ourselves with peculiar pleasure, and we wish now to introduce it to the notice of our readers, in order to bring before them some of the facts, scenes and statements which are found in this beautiful narrative of the life and times of John Wycliffe.

There is no certain information to be obtained either as to the place where the Reformer drew his first breath, or the family from which he descended. It has been ascertained that he must have been born about the year 1324, and Dr. Vaughan has satisfied himself that he was one of the Wycliffes of Wycliffe, near Richmond, in Yorkshire,* who were then, and for centuries afterwards, the chief proprietors of land in the parish. In order to account for the absence of all accurate knowledge respecting the pedigree and early history of Wycliffe, it has been supposed,—and certain expressions which frequently occur in his manuscripts are said to justify the inference,—that, in consequence of what they deemed his heretical course, he was disowned by his relatives, who, holding steadily to Romanism, could have had no desire to preserve the memory of one whom they would look upon as bringing dishonour upon his kindred by deserting and denouncing the faith of his fathers.† To whatever cause it may be attributed, the fact is unquestionable, that there is really nothing definite to be learned concerning the youthful habits or training of Wycliffe. His name is, however, found, in 1340, amongst those who entered Queen's College, Oxford, and it is probable that he was then in the sixteenth year of his age. After a short interval he removed to Merton College, which had attained considerable celebrity, and of which he became a fellow. Dr. Vaughan justly observes, that no better evidence can be afforded of Wycliffe's industry and sound learning, according to the estimate of learning in those times, than his position at Oxford. He could never have obtained the reward of scholarship which he enjoyed, unless he had applied himself with all the energy and enthusiasm of his nature to those pursuits which were then considered most worthy of a scholar's regard. It is said, indeed,

* "Less than forty years since, there was an old man living in the parish of Wycliffe, who, though in humble condition, claimed to be a descendant of the Wycliffe family. He was tall, of good presence, and those who knew him often spoke of the strong resemblance between his features and those given in the portrait of the great Reformer."—P. 7.

† "The reaction in everything social and religious, which came on immediately after the death of Wycliffe, and which continued for more than a century, placed a sea of troubles between the age of our Reformer and the age of Luther. Much that would otherwise have been preserved, was thus lost. Had the great Reformation succeeded at once, in place of being delayed to some hundred and fifty years later, the tendency would have been to hoard up whatever men knew about Wycliffe, and not to allow such knowledge to drop, vestige after vestige, into forgetfulness. His own family....were in this reaction. In feudal times, men of such position deprecated few things so much as to see the stain of treason on their escutcheon; and so, with many, if there might be a deeper stain than that, it would be the stain of heresy." P. 9.

that the logic of Aristotle had such charms for him, that he got by heart the most abstruse parts of the works of that philosopher. There can be no doubt that he was equally distinguished by his proficiency in all the questions and controversies connected with the divinity then most in favour with doctors designated angelic, profound and seraphic, whose disputes, however they might exercise the intellect, issued in no good practical result, and could neither enrich the mind nor move the heart. But not to such themes alone were the thoughts of Wycliffe directed. There would seem to be a season in the experience of all earnest souls, when the consciousness of a God to be obeyed, of duty to be done, of heaven to be sought, occasions great anxiety about spiritual things, and an intense desire to be found faithful. When he was twenty-four years old, Wycliffe appears to have been awakened to that deep conviction of the solemnity and importance of religious concerns, by which he was ever afterwards characterized, in consequence of a fearful pestilence which, after having caused a terrible destruction of human life in other parts of the world, penetrated into England, bringing with it suffering, trial, death and mourning. Amid the disease and desolation that were around him, he saw the necessity of being placed in a true position towards God and his own destiny. The idea of eternity made him feel that something more than the knowledge of scholastic subtleties must be sought to give him peace. And we are told that he "passed days and nights in his cell groaning and sighing, and calling upon God to shew him the path he ought to follow."* It was at this period, it is believed, that he commenced that personal and careful examination of Scripture which led to such marked and decided results in relation to his own mind and character, and produced fruits of which the Protestant world is at this hour reaping the advantage.

Wycliffe's course, until he was forty years old, was not one that was calculated to draw upon him, in any great degree, the public eye. He was in possession of the living of Fylingham, in the diocese of Lincoln, and it may be reasonably inferred that he was earnest and faithful in the discharge of all those quiet but important duties which devolved upon him as a parish priest. He had also been made master of Balliol College, and afterwards, under circumstances which subsequently brought him into contact with the Court of Rome, was transferred to the wardenship of Canterbury Hall,—posts in which he was enabled to employ his eminent attainments and his eloquence so as to do good service in the cause of religion at Oxford. Canterbury Hall had been founded by the primate, Simon Islep, and the first warden was a monk of the name of Wodehall,—a man who proved himself wholly incompetent to fill the situation, either with credit to

* D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation, Vol. IV. p. 87.

himself or with usefulness to others. The Archbishop therefore removed him from his office, and, in 1365, appointed Wycliffe in his place. Islep, however, died in the following year, and his successor, Langham, ejected Wycliffe and restored Wodehall. Against this proceeding Wycliffe appealed to the Pope. But he was known in the university to hold opinions adverse to Papal authority. In his discourses from the pulpit, and in his exercises in the schools, he had not concealed his persuasion that much of the spirit and many of the doctrines of the Church of Rome were contrary to the spirit and teaching of Christ and his apostles; and in consequence of his frequent reference to the New Testament, which he regarded as the perfect rule of Christian faith, he was designated the "Gospel Doctor."

Now all this was well known at the Papal Court, whose sympathies were not likely, therefore, to be on the side of Wycliffe. For five years his cause was pending; and when at length judgment was given, the decision was against him. But in the mean time, the Reformer was led to take a more determined part in opposition to the Papacy and its claims, satisfied as he was that they were adverse to the true interests of his country. Under the pontificate of Pope Innocent III., and when the weak and contemptible King John was on the throne of England, a disgraceful compact was entered into, by which, on the one side, was promised spiritual protection, and, on the other, the monarch consented to hold his crown as a fief of the see of Rome, and to acknowledge his dependence by the payment of an annual tribute. This agreement was hateful to the English barons at the time when it was made, and they nobly contended that, except in ecclesiastical matters, the Pope had no right to interfere with the concerns of their country. The odious tribute, however, was not altogether discontinued until the reign of Edward III. Thirty-five years after he had refused to be esteemed a vassal of the Pope, Urban V. renewed his claim, demanding that the arrears for that period should be paid, and threatening Edward that, in case of default, he would be summoned to Rome to answer for his disobedience. But Urban had not to deal with a man like John. The King had no disposition to yield to Papal assumptions in regard to temporal power, and the conqueror of Cressy and Poictiers was not to be frightened into submission to a Pontiff exiled from Rome and under French influence. The country supported him in his determination. Parliament was unanimously in his favour. The nobility and popular representatives declared themselves ready to place the resources of the nation at the disposal of their sovereign for the defence of his crown and dignity.*

It may be well supposed that a circumstance of this kind could not occur without causing great excitement through the land,

* Monograph, p. 105.

and that it would be particularly felt in a city such as Oxford. The Pope found an advocate for his pretensions in a monk, who wrote a treatise, which produced a considerable impression, and challenged Wycliffe to meet him in the controversy. This shews that Wycliffe must have been looked upon as a leader amongst the liberal minds of the age, and that his acute and penetrating intellect was exercised upon the subject of the Romish system some years at least before the business in relation to Canterbury Hall was concluded.* Nor did he shrink from the discussion. He vindicated by unanswerable arguments the independence and supremacy of the civil power. He contended that priestly authority has properly no control over princes or people in the affairs of this world, and justified resistance to sacerdotal arrogance and ambition. And the enlightened thought and judicious labours of Wycliffe in this instance were not unrewarded. He was made Chaplain to the King, appointed Professor of Divinity, and presented with the living of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire.

Though thus adverse to the claims of the Papacy, there is no reason to suppose that Wycliffe had any idea of a separation from the Church of Rome. He still proclaimed himself, indeed, her "lowly and obedient son." What he desired was the correction of abuses and the removal of corruptions which had grown up within her, and which were incompatible, in his view, both with patriotism and Christianity. Two years after he was placed in the Divinity chair, he was associated with other commissioners to meet the Pope's ambassadors at Bruges, for conference on certain ecclesiastical questions affecting the interests of the Church, and particularly relating to the presentation of benefices in England. The negotiation was a protracted one. During its continuance, he had many opportunities of observing and discovering the real policy and purposes of the Papal Court, and became evidently more strongly persuaded of its hostility to liberty and pure religion. It is probable that he returned with a fixed resolution vigorously to expose and denounce its designs.

The necessity of reform was originally impressed upon the mind of Wycliffe by the condition of the religious orders in England. The monastic system, it has been sometimes said, was a necessary phase of Christianity; but this is a subject upon which we may not now enter. That fervent piety, self-denial, lofty virtue and the purest charity, were often found in convents, we do not doubt. No one who understands the middle age will deny that the monks did much to promote learning and literature, art and science,—and that of agriculture and architecture they

* It has been urged by Roman Catholic writers that the zeal of the Reformer against Romanism was caused by his being deprived of the wardenship of Canterbury Hall; but Dr. Vaughan clearly shews that the charge is utterly destitute of foundation.

were especially the friends.* But our admiration of the good accomplished by many of their number, must not lead us to lose sight of the evil influences that were at work within their institutions, and the reproach which they often brought upon sacred things by their ignorance and licentiousness, their indolence and seclusion, their cupidity and hypocrisy. The corrupt state of the monasteries called into action the several orders of friars,—men who at first bore a sincere protest against the monks, and were truly devoted to the religious instruction of the people. They taught from house to house, preached in the open air, and gave themselves to doing good. The cause in which they were engaged made them popular, and they increased with marvellous rapidity. They were under a vow of celibacy, but their habits were itinerant. Collectively, as well as individually, they renounced all possessions; and, trusting to charity for their daily bread, they received the name of mendicants. They were of different fraternities,† but pursued a common object. Popes sanctioned their ministry. They obtained permission to teach, and to discharge all the other functions of the priestly office, wherever they went, and were released from the ordinary episcopal authority and ecclesiastical discipline.

Now it may be easily conceived that such bodies of men, comprising, as Southey observes, in the course of time, some of the subtlest and profoundest intellects that the world had ever seen, would soon become very powerful, and that they must be exceedingly dangerous and mischievous unless guided by the highest wisdom and influenced by pure and righteous motives. But whatever they might have been at the commencement of their work, and for a season, these mendicants, in the time of Wycliffe,

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* Dr. Vaughan's observations on monastic establishments are made in a thoroughly candid and philosophical spirit. He acknowledges the value of the labours and services of the monks on all points wherein their works demand a generous recognition. Of their abodes, he justly says, that they "served everywhere as centres of hospitality to the wayfarer and the needy. The sound of the convent-bell often came to the ear of the fainting traveller, through the openings of the forest or across the desolate moor, as the promise of shelter, refreshment and rest. Hospitality was the boast of those religious brotherhoods. Nothing was more dreaded by them than the reproach of being wanting in that virtue. Many a valuable bequest came to them in the faith that it would be applied, at least, in good part, to such uses. It is beyond doubt, however, that in times of dearth, sacrifices of a magnanimous description were frequently made by these fraternities, to meet the wants of the starving outcasts who flocked to the gates, and looked up to them for bread and shelter. They have been known in such times to sell their plate, to part with some of their most valued treasures, and even to mortgage their lands, that the poor might not be sent away unfed. While in times of invasion and of civil disturbance, the church and the abbey presented almost the only sanctuary, and the priest or the monk were the only parties left to mediate between the strong and the weak."—Pp. 73, 74.

† There were four distinct orders of friars,—the Franciscans, whose founder, St. Francis, was the son of a rich merchant at Assissi; the Dominicans, established by St. Dominic, who also instituted the Inquisition; the Carmelites, and the Augustines. The two former orders were the most influential, and the Franciscans were the most prominent in England.

were notoriously corrupt, and "the opprobrium and scandal" of the Church of Rome. Their laws regarding poverty had been violated, and they were conspicuous for their wealth, and for the shameful means to which they resorted in order to enrich their communities. The superstition of the people was fostered by their frauds and fables, and the cause of morality injured by their disgraceful conduct. Their confessionals were crowded, for they were "easy" men "to give penance," and dispensed pardon to the most abandoned for money. Chaucer, who was contemporary with Wycliffe, was well acquainted with the manners and practices of the friars, and those who have read his works will remember the description he has given of them, and the frequent allusions he has made to their avarice, cunning and sensuality.* When the voice and pen of Wycliffe† were first

* What a picture of these men, as a class, is presented to our minds by the poet's representation of one of them in the Canterbury Tales, who, having excited the people in church, by his preaching, to masses and donations, goes forth with his staff uplifted to pry into houses and to beg on his way!

"His felaw had a staf typped with horn,
A payr of tablis al of yvory,
And a poyntel y-polischt fetisly,
And wroot the names alway as he stood,
Of all folk that gaf him eny good,
Ascaunce that he wolde for hem preye.
"Gif us a busshel whet, or malt, or reye,
A Goddes kichil, or a trip of cheese,
Or elles what yow list, we may not chese;
A Goddes halpeny, or a masse peny;
Or gif us of youre braune, if ye have eny,
A dagoun of your blanket, leeve dame,
Our suster deer!—lo! her I write your name—
Bacoun or beef, or such thing as we fynde."
A stourdy harlot ay went hem byhynde,
That was her hostis man, and bar a sak,
And what men gaf hem, layd it on his bak.
And whan that he was out atte dore, anoon,
He planed out the names everych oon,
That he iforn had writen in his tablis:
He served hem with nyfles and with fablis."

And again, in "The Pardoneres Tale:"

"I have reliks and pardonn in my male,
As fair as eny man in Engelond,
Which were me geve by the Popes hond.
If eny of yow wol of devocioun
Offren, and have myn absolucioun,
Cometh forth anon, and knelith her adoun,
And ye schul have here my pardoun.
Or elles takith pardoun, as ye wende,
Al newe and freissch at every townes ende,
So that ye offren alway new and newe,
Nobles and pens, which that ben good and trewe."

CHAUCER—Edition of Percy Society, Vol. II.

† Wycliffe and Chaucer are said to have been attached friends. We know nothing beyond the report of the historians of the intimacy of these distinguished men, but we feel that there must have been a real sympathy between them. The divine would not be insensible, we are sure, to the rich fancy, the comic humour and the inventive power of the poet; and Chaucer was not one who could be indifferent, though he does

employed against them, cannot be precisely stated; but as a young man, he must have been aware of the disorders which they occasioned at Oxford, and he then probably imbibed the aversion towards them which was generally entertained at the university on account of their offensive behaviour. They claimed exemption from its duties and its jurisdiction, and yet perpetually interfered with its rights. In their zeal for proselytism, they constantly sought to increase their disciples from the most promising of the youth who came to the schools of learning; and so afraid at last were parents of their teaching and example, that they would not trust their sons at Oxford, and the number of students was consequently reduced from thirty to six thousand.* It is certain that Wycliffe was one of the ablest and most uncompromising opponents of the friars. For more than twenty years did he expose the dangerous tendency of their sentiments, and point out the necessity of abolishing their orders. Dr. Vaughan has clearly shewn that his reasoning against them "embodies the great Protestant principle," and that, "carried out, it must be fatal to everything ecclesiastical that has no better foundation than tradition." He did not at once perceive the legitimate consequences of his own arguments; and it was not until he occupied the Professor's chair, and delivered his lectures on theology, that his true position in relation to the errors of Romanism became manifest. As his views gradually expanded and light beamed upon his mind, the results of his meditations and inquiries were given with all solemnity to his pupils and hearers, who must have felt that the startling doctrines to which they listened would, if generally embraced, "give a new complexion and a new soul to the religion of Christendom." The infallibility of the Pope, penance, pardons, indulgences, the worship of the Virgin and of Saints, prayers for the dead, the pride and luxury of the hierarchy, the celibacy of the clergy, were all declared to be without sanction from the word of God. He boldly exhorted men to examine and judge for themselves, and assured them that neither priestly censures nor papal excommunications could harm them if they sincerely believed in Christ, and were conformed to

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not appear to have joined his party, to the fine mental and moral qualities of the Reformer. We can well believe, indeed, that the character of Wycliffe is depicted in Chaucer's "good man of religion," who "was a pore persoun of a toun."

"But riche he was of holy thought and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes Gospel truly wolde preche.
His parischens devoutly wold he teche.
* * *
A bettre preest I trowe ther nowher non is.
He waytud after no pompe ne reverence,
Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
But Cristes lore, and his Apostles twelve,
He taught, and ferst he folwed it himselve."

* Monograph, p. 83. Southey's Book of the Church, p. 188.

the Divine will and law. Dr. Vaughan truly says that this was bold and wholesome thinking to find ventilation in Oxford in the year 1372, and for some years subsequent.

"Young men who listened to such teaching, left the lecture-room, as we may suppose, in grave musing, or in high talk together, upon what they had heard. Many a night, as we imagine, did the students of Wycliffe's class see verging into morning, as they examined and discussed the questions which day by day were suggested to them. Nor did the talk end there. It was the dinner-talk, the supper-talk, the highway-talk—the talk, somehow, to which every man felt himself to be a party. We have loop-holes enough through which to look into those times, to be quite sure that it was so. Conservative men,—men fixed in old habits of thought, who saw, or thought they saw danger in the distance, were compelled to be observant of what was passing, and gave out their protests and their cautions: while men of another order felt as if a morning freshness had come upon them. These last were delighted beyond measure with the prospect of seeing the conventional and the worn-out, so long familiar to them, give place to something better; and abundant was the material for speech-making in them which struggled to get utterance. Truly, John de Wycliffe, thou art a committed man, and had better not have gone so far, if thou art not prepared to go further. Thou hast said, a man has 'only to declare with constancy the law of Christ, before Cæsarian prelates, and straightway the flower of martyrdom will be at hand:'—and as thou hast clearly resolved to 'declare,' after that fashion, we must suppose that thy account is laid with the thing 'at hand.'"—Pp. 164, 165.

The course which Wycliffe had pursued was one of great peril. He had been warned, indeed, of approaching danger; but he calmly resolved to abide the issue. In the month of February, 1377, he was summoned to appear at St. Paul's, London, before the Houses of Convocation, that he might answer to a charge of heresy. He did not hesitate to obey the summons. It was a serious accusation; but the Reformer was conscious of the justice of his cause, and he was not without friends and protectors. John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the King's son, and Lord Percy, Earl Marshal, promised him their support, encouraged him to meet his enemies without dismay, and told him that they would "accompany him in person" to the trial. The scene on the morning of the Convocation, and before "the two houses of this clerical Parliament," is very strikingly narrated by Dr. Vaughan.

"What is afoot is somewhat noised abroad; and you see the dependants of these great ones, and others of the populace of London, crowding into the sacred building. The edifice itself is large—larger than the structure which now lifts its head so high on the same site, and is in the old, massive style of Norman architecture. The space open around it also is large, if we bear in mind that it stands in the midst of a city within whose contracted walls ingenuity in the way of package has been tasked to the uttermost. Soon after the prelates have taken their seats, a noise is heard at the entrance. It approaches nearer,

until, amidst much disorder and hubbub, a way is opened through the crowd immediately in front of the assembled clergy—and the man John de Wycliffe, of whom enough had been heard, but whom few there present had seen, stands in their midst, and with a presence of his own which bids fair to be a match for any presence. There you can imagine him—a man rising somewhere above the middle stature. His right hand is raised in the clutch of his tall white staff. His clothing consists of a dark simple robe, belted about the waist, and dropping in folds from the shoulders to the waist, and from the waist to the feet: while above that grey and flowing beard, you see a set of features which speak throughout of nobleness, and which a man might do well to travel far even to look upon. Behind him you see his servant, bearing books and papers, especially *the* book above all books,—ammunition for the battle, if there is to be a field-day. On his one hand is John of Gaunt, eldest son of the king; on the other, lord Percy, earl marshal of England. These were bold men all. But Courtney, the presiding bishop, was also a bold man. He rose in high displeasure, and was the first to speak, when, according to our authority, the following altercation ensued.

"*Bishop Courtney.* Lord Percy, if I had known what masteries you would have kept in the church, I would have stopped you out from coming hither.

"*Duke of Lancaster.* He shall keep such masteries, though you say nay.

"*Lord Percy.* Wycliffe, sit down, for you have many things to answer to, and you need to repose yourself on a soft seat.

"*Bishop Courtney.* It is unreasonable that one cited before his ordinary, should sit down during his answer. He must and shall stand.

"*Duke of Lancaster.* Lord Percy's motion for Wycliffe is but reasonable. And as for you, my lord bishop, who are grown so proud and arrogant, I will bring down the pride, not of you alone, but of all the prelacy in England.

"*Bishop Courtney.* Do your worst, sir.

"*Duke of Lancaster.* Thou bearest thyself so brag upon thy parents, which shall not be able to keep thee: they shall have enough to do to help themselves.

"*Bishop Courtney.* My confidence is not in my parents, nor in any man else, but only in God, in whom I trust, by whose assistance I will be bold to speak the truth.

"*Duke of Lancaster.* Rather than I will take these words at his hands, I will pluck the bishop by the hair out of the church.

"This last expression, as the words indicate, was not addressed to the bishop. It was said in an undertone to lord Percy, but sufficiently loud to be heard by the people near, who, for the most part, took side with the bishop, and such was the scene of excitement and confusion that followed, that the meeting dissolved, and Wycliffe, who had been a silent witness to this 'pretty quarrel,' retired under the protection of his powerful friends."—Pp. 186—189.

Very painful to the Reformer must have been these proceedings, and the tumult and violence that ensued. John of Gaunt's sympathy with him was rather of a political than a religious character, and his presence and interference, powerful as he was,

from his unpopularity at the time, were injurious to Wycliffe. But the end was not yet. A few months after the closing of the Convocation, Edward III. died, and in the beginning of the reign of his young successor, the discussion of the question respecting Papal encroachments was again opened, and with his accustomed zeal Wycliffe engaged in it, and made himself, if possible, still more obnoxious to his adversaries. It was now determined that strong measures should be resorted to against his heretical teaching and for the suppression of his doctrine. To the King, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Bishop of London, and to the University of Oxford, the Pope had addressed himself, complaining that the Reformer should have been so long allowed to spread his opinions, and demanding that hostile measures should be taken towards him. We find accordingly that he was summoned to appear before a synod at Lambeth, in April 1378. A paper containing the heresies with which he was charged was sent to him, and on the day appointed he appeared with a written reply.* Crowds of people filled and surrounded the place of meeting, who declared that no violence should be done to him. But while the Bishops were deliberating, an authoritative message was brought them from the Queen-mother, by which they were forbidden to pass sentence upon Wycliffe. He was again delivered out of the hands of his enemies, and returned to his work at Oxford and Lutterworth. But the labours in which he had been long engaged, and the harassing nature of the warfare to which he was called, were not without effect upon a constitution not naturally strong, and he was overtaken by sickness which was expected to terminate in death. A favourable opportunity had thus presented itself, it was supposed, for obtaining an acknowledgment of his errors, and admittance to his chamber was gained in the hope that he might be induced to make the desired recantation.

"Wycliffe was in Oxford when this sickness arrested him and confined him to his bed. Then it was, that four doctors, who were called regents, representing the four orders of friars, were deputed to wait on

* This document has been thought both by friends and foes to be wanting in the manly and definite statement and defence of his opinions which were required from Wycliffe. Dr. Vaughan, with that patience and candour which he invariably bestows upon all that bears upon the memory and views of the Reformer, enters at length into this subject, and gives the material portions of the paper without abridgment, with such observations as he deems necessary to bring out its real meaning. We must say that he appears to us to have successfully shewn that there was neither evasiveness nor timidity displayed by Wycliffe; that the men to whose judgment the propositions were submitted, were far from deeming them harmless; and that sufficient allowance has not been made for the difference in the mode of treating such questions amongst ourselves, and that employed five centuries since by our ancestors. It cannot be doubted that the spiritual authority claimed by the Romish Church was distinctly denied by Wycliffe, and that, as to property and character, he plainly avowed that his object was to bring Pope and clergy under the sway of the temporal power. Dr. Vaughan is entitled to observe, that so far from being blamed for cowardice at this period of his life, the Reformer should be praised for his "rare honesty and bravery."

their expiring enemy. With these most religious persons, the same number of civil officers, called senators of the city and aldermen of the wards, were associated. When these persons entered the apartment of the sick man, his head was reclining on his pillow. Some expressions of sympathy were dropped, and something was said about hope that he might recover. But it was presently intimated that, at such a season, it was presumed that he could not but be alive to the many wrongs which the whole mendicant brotherhood had experienced at his hands; and as it was now probable that death was about to put an end to his course, it was only charitable to conclude that he would be willing to confess himself penitent, and that, with a due Christian humility, he would be prepared to revoke whatever he had said to the injury of fraternities so eminent in learning, sanctity, and usefulness. Wycliffe remained motionless and silent until this address was concluded. He then beckoned to his servant to raise him in his bed. This done, he fixed his eyes on the said doctors and aldermen, and with all his remaining strength exclaimed, '*I shall not die, but live, and again declare the evil deeds of the Friars.*' The divines and the civilians, having looked strangely at each other, retreated, as we can imagine, in no little disappointment and dismay. Such, in substance, is the story which tradition has handed down to us. The picture it presents is eminently characteristic of the parties composing it, and of the times with which it is connected. The words which sufficed to confound and repel so much learning, and so much civic dignity, were not words to be soon forgotten in the talk and memories of Oxford."—Pp. 223—225.

Wycliffe had been directed by the Lambeth synod to abstain from teaching his doctrines. The prohibition was, however, disregarded. He was more active than ever in diffusing his sentiments, and took advantage of the schism* which occurred at this juncture to weaken the Papal power, to promote his objects as a religious Reformer. His own wondrous activity in the halls of the university and in the pulpit, did not satisfy his ardour. He felt the weight of his responsibility. Increasing infirmity, and the dangers which beset his path, reminded him that but a short season of active exertion might remain for him. A vast itinerant organization was established for the support of what he believed to be falsehood and delusion. Why should not something on a more systematic and extended plan be attempted for the diffusion of purer conceptions of the Christian life and of the gospel of Christ? There were many amongst his disciples who were ready to respond to his suggestion, and to make the necessary sacrifices to carry it out,—men of deep piety, vigorous principle, considerable mental power, and a ready utterance

* On the death of Gregory XI. in 1378, he was succeeded by Urban VI., a haughty and arbitrary pontiff, who gave so much offence by his behaviour, that the Cardinals, pretending that they had found some flaw in his election, declared it void, and chose Clement VII. in his stead. This proceeding was of course attended with serious consequences. The two Popes claimed an equal right to the chair of St. Peter. Both had their adherents who violently espoused their cause, and Popery was shaken to its foundations.

which fitted them for addressing themselves with acceptance to the popular mind. And these coadjutors of Wycliffe passed from parish to parish, from village to village, from town to town, disseminating his views. They preached in the market-places, in the highway, in barns, in private houses, wherever an opening was found for instructing and exhorting, and whenever they could obtain a hearing for their discourses. The most extraordinary effects were produced by their zeal and energy. Those who came to mock were awed by their evident sincerity, and numbers went away humbled and converted. The clothing of these "poor priests," as they were called, was of the coarsest kind. They travelled barefoot, and were satisfied with the plainest food. The common people heard them gladly. But they were capable of addressing themselves to the most refined and cultivated, and were as skilful in argumentation as they were successful in persuasion. The Reformer himself took part with the "poor priests" in their arduous labours, whilst he continued to publish tracts and treatises, as they were required, on the various points in dispute with the Romanists. And, that his opinions might be tried by the test of Scripture, he resolved to translate both the Old and New Testament into the English tongue. There was for him during the last years of his life no season of repose from toil. We are filled with astonishment when we trace the record of what he accomplished. And it is pleasant to know that his own eyes were gladdened by evidences that could not be mistaken of the beneficial results of the great movement at the head of which he stood. By his adversaries it is admitted that the greater number of the people of London, and more than half of the population of England, were Lollards.* The number was probably exaggerated; but it must have been considerable, or such a statement could not have been made.

The tenor of Wycliffe's past course will prepare us for now finding him an impugner of the doctrine of Transubstantiation. He devoted his lectures as Professor of Divinity, in 1381, to the refutation of the Romish view of the Sacrament of the altar, and to the exposition of what he understood to be the real design of the Lord's Supper.† His fame and influence as a teacher had hitherto enabled him to keep his position in the University; but the authorities became so alarmed at the extremes to which he had gone, that they now meet, condemn his conclusions, and decree that every person so offending shall be subjected to suspension

* "The name of Lollards had been given in the Low Countries to the persecuted Franciscans and other enthusiasts, from their practice of singing hymns,.... loller, or luller, in one of the old German dialects, signifying to sing, as a mother when she lulls her babe." It was used generally with reference to those who made a stricter profession of religion than was common, and in this sense, no doubt, was primarily applied to the disciples of Wycliffe.

† His views on this subject appear to be those which were afterwards adopted by the Church of England.

from scholastic exercises, to imprisonment, and to the greater excommunication. This order was delivered to him in the midst of his class. He appealed to the King in Parliament, but in vain. The great ones of the land who had formerly extended to him their aid, had no desire to embroil themselves by meddling with the bitter disputes incident to this theological question, and advised him to submit to his ecclesiastical superiors. But he replied, that he should "be worse than an infidel if he did not defend unto the death the law of Christ."

The year in which all this happened is memorable on account of the insurrection of Wat Tyler. No proof is there that the ministry of Wycliffe was at all connected with this outbreak. But it suited the purposes of those who sought to destroy him, that it *should* be attributed to his opinions; and a fearful storm of persecution burst upon his followers. The Reformer himself, prevented from appearing in his chair at the University, retired to his duties and studies at Lutterworth. But he was soon summoned before a Convention at Oxford to answer for what he had taught. He could not have failed to see that this Convention might be attended with very serious consequences, but he resolutely vindicated his doctrine, and exposed the misrepresentations with which he had been assailed. It has been said that he betrayed symptoms of pusillanimity, and by his explanations and recantations moved his judges to clemency. We see nothing in his language to warrant such a representation. To us he appears to have borne the ordeal bravely. Neither at this Convention, nor at any other time, have we been able to discover any sufficient ground to justify Mr. Hume and others* in accusing him of a want of firmness and fortitude. And that he did not fall a sacrifice to the malice of his foes, is to be ascribed to the influential support which he had received, and the general respect and confidence which his character inspired. On withdrawing again to Lutterworth, an old man, with a body worn and exhausted by his many labours, he might have consistently sought, among his books and flock, the rest which he must have

* Godwin, in his Life of Chaucer, falls in with Hume's view that Wycliffe had not the martyr spirit, argues that it is not wrong for a man to temporize to a certain degree with persons such as those with whom the Reformer had to deal, in order to save himself from death, and thinks that it may be regarded as an additional proof of the genius of Wycliffe, to extricate himself in such a way from the power of his enemies. We are sure that Godwin misunderstood Wycliffe. It was the Reformer's doctrine—a nobler one than Godwin acknowledged—that the law of Christian openness and sincerity must always be obeyed, without regard to consequences. The man who could exhort those of his own day to fidelity, could hardly have been defective in moral courage. "It is cowardice," said Wycliffe, "in Christ's disciples, if they spare for bodily pain and death, to tell openly the truth of God's law. Christ willeth that men dread nothing principally but God, and offence to him. For if men dread bodily pains and death, and therefore cease to tell openly the truth, they are, with this, unable to regain the bliss of heaven; and if they say openly and stedfastly the truth of God, nothing may harm them, so that they keep patience and charity."—Monograph, pp. 413, 414.

so much needed. But whilst power remained, he did not cease to exert it. The Bible was not yet in the hands of the people. The two Popes were troubling Europe with their contentions. And when Urban sought to draw money and men from England to support him against his rival, a voice of warning issued from the abode of the Reformer, condemning war for any such object, and proclaiming the Pontiff to be antichrist.

Wycliffe's great work was that of placing the Bible in the hands of his countrymen in their own language. Detached portions of the Scriptures had been previously translated, but very few were privileged to possess them, and "they were generally guarded by a commentary." With Wycliffe originated the idea of rendering the whole of the sacred writings into English, and circulating them far and wide over the land. The translation was made from the Latin Vulgate. The Reformer had no knowledge of Hebrew and Greek. He was assisted by the counsel and co-operation of learned men, but to what extent has not been ascertained. This was amongst the last of the works which he accomplished, and it appropriately closes his astonishing career. It was indeed a great achievement. The Church of Rome consistently withholds the Bible from the laity, except under the direction of the clergy, and declares that its meaning is only to be determined by priestly infallibility and authority. Wycliffe asserted, on the contrary, that the judgment of private persons ought to be exercised on the records of divine revelation, and his desire before he died was to enable the people to read in their own tongue the wonderful works of God.* The interest called forth by the circulation of the Scriptures was great and general. They were eagerly read and listened to, but the expense of procuring even a few favourite chapters was considerable. The art of printing was the glorious invention of succeeding times, and long after the Reformer had gone to his reward. By that discovery the Book of Life is within the reach of the poorest person amongst us. And a copy of the Bible, fairly written, which a few years after Wycliffe's death would have cost thirty pounds of our money, can now be sold by the Bible Society for a shilling.

Wycliffe continued in the discharge of his public duties until the hour that the Master called him to the nobler employments of heaven.

"He had then reached the sixtieth year of his age. But if life is to be measured by its labours and its deeds, the Reformer had lived a

* Sir Thomas More declared that he had seen "Bybles fayre and old wryten in Englyshe," done before Wycliffe's days, which, by the Bishop's permission, were "left in ley mennys handys, and womens, to suche as he knew for good and catholyke folke, that used it with devocyon and sobernesse." And Southey considers Sir Thomas More's authority as decisive upon this subject. Dr. Vaughan thinks that they must have been copies of Wycliffe's translations that More saw, "some of which, it is well known, were in possession of the prelates and others in the sixteenth century."

much longer life at that time than that number of years would indicate. Two years earlier, his health was so infirm, from an attack of paralysis, that he could honestly plead his weakness alone, as a sufficient reason for his not attempting a journey to Rome, in obedience to a citation from the Pontiff. His labours since that time had been, as we have seen, most earnest and incessant. His enemies were observant of the fact that his power to do mischief would not probably be of long continuance, and appear to have been more reconciled on this account, than they would otherwise have been, to the adoption of a timid policy in relation to him.

"On the twenty-eighth, or, as some say, on the twenty-ninth of December, while engaged in the service of the church at Lutterworth, he was seized with palsy, and on the thirty-first of that month he expired. It is within that old chancel, which is still standing, that this last sickness comes upon him. Through that low arched door-way, which still looks towards the spot on which the rectory-house then stood, we see him borne; and, after an interval of two or three days and nights, during which he does not speak, nor even seem to be conscious, all that was mortal of John Wycliffe is left to receive the last offices from the hands of surviving friendship and affection. Some days later, his body is borne back to the interior of the old church, and, the usual ceremonies performed, it is dropped into the vault prepared for it within that narrow chancel, on the floor of which he had so often stood, the living teacher of a humble flock; and at the same time, as a man who had so moved the mind of his age, as to fill great churchmen with dismay, not excepting popes and conclaves."—Pp. 467, 468.

We have already exceeded the limits within which we intended to confine this article. It is but little, therefore, that we can add to what we have written. Highly as we have always esteemed the character and genius of the Reformer, he appears to us, we confess, more truly great and excellent in Dr. Vaughan's pages than we had previously imagined. How justly does Southey say, that the fame of Wycliffe suffers no abatement upon comparison with the most illustrious of those who have followed in the path which he opened up! To appreciate him and his work aright, we should view him, as far as possible, in the light of his own age. Some of his speculations, if we properly understand them, would be very dangerous under the sway of ignorance and fanaticism. His theology, in most respects, resembles that of Luther and Calvin. He was a most voluminous author, and, from what remains to us of his writings, we see that he clothed his thoughts in clear and impressive language. As a preacher, he was eminently popular, speaking with distinctness and directness, and so as to be interesting to his unlettered hearers at Lutterworth, and the learned who gathered round him at Oxford. He was a good pastor, a friend of the poor, and a man of practical religion. We would not conceal his faults. But those who condemn his harshness as a controversialist, and his dogmatism in setting forth his own sentiments, would do well to remember the

words of Fuller respecting him: "He was a man, and so subject to error; living in a dark age, more obnoxious to stumble; vexed with opposition, which makes men reel into violence; and therefore it is unreasonable that the constitution and temper of his positive opinions should be guessed by his polemical heat when he was chafed in disputation."

The enmity of the Church of Rome towards Wycliffe was not buried in the tomb with him. Forty-three years after his body had been in the grave, it was decreed that he had died an obstinate heretic. His remains were disinterred, and, having been burnt to ashes, were cast into the river that runs by the town of Lutterworth. We have stood on the spot where it is said this deed of a persecuting age was done, and as we thought of the happier times in which our own lot is cast, and rejoiced that bigotry and intolerance are no longer able to perpetuate such indignities in the sacred name of Christ, we were forcibly reminded of our obligations to the great Reformer. Dr. Vaughan's Monograph on Wycliffe is peculiarly appropriate now, when so much is said and written on the Church of Rome. It will be useful to Protestants to ponder this volume, that they may understand the true nature of Popery, and seek by Scripture, reason and love, to expose its errors, and the evils to which it leads. But they will not profit by it as they ought, unless they also learn from it to rise above a sectarian spirit, to hail and venerate Christian integrity and piety wherever they are found, and to leave men in religion fairly and freely to judge that which is right.

SONNET,

ON ENTERING THE CHURCH OF THE DIVINE UNITY, APRIL, 1854.

When this fair monument to faith divine
In the one only God, whom Jesus knew,
Shall on its airy front shew many a line,
And pinnacle and turret bear the hue
Of ashen age, and teach its near decline,
Oh then, still then, may here the refuge be
Of love, and faith, and hope, and liberty!
And as the circling years glide softly by,
May all their mingled forces sweetly blend
Here in one ample round of harmony,
Whose every echo upwards still shall tend;
While holiest, meditative, silent prayer,
Freeing the attent soul of earthly care,
Shall wing its way aloft in voiceless ecstacy!

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CHANNING'S OPINIONS ON WAR.

Although there prevails a unanimity almost unexampled in this country on the subject of the contest on which we are entering, there are still a few truly excellent men unable to reconcile participation in anything so dreadful as war with their views of Christian duty. Fully acknowledging that the right is on our side, and that our adversary has put himself so completely in the wrong, that he has cut himself off from the sympathy of all honourable men, and that his success might be perilous to ourselves, they yet shrink from disobeying, as they suppose, the commands to love our enemies and to resist not evil. These precepts, no less than the whole spirit of Christianity, they conceive to be opposed to any use of violence, and especially of violence involving the infliction of physical misery and moral evil upon the innocent as well as the guilty.

It is not our object now to enter upon any discussion on this subject. Without renouncing a claim to take part, on fitting occasions, in political controversy, we feel that the strongest arguments might seem to partake too much of the excitement of the time, to be entitled to be heard in apparent opposition to a divine command. We will therefore content ourselves with referring briefly to the recorded conclusions of others, on which no suspicion of this kind can rest, and which, from the calm wisdom, no less than the eminently Christian piety of the writer who has left them to us, derive an authority as high as any merely human counsels can have.

The published works of Channing contain two sermons, delivered in 1816 and 1835, and a lecture, delivered in 1838, all on the subject of War, which he has treated with more fulness than almost any topic not properly theological, except perhaps Slavery. We have also, in some editions, extracts from sermons preached in 1812 and 1814, previous to and during the war with England. There are also interspersed in other discourses remarks on the same subject, especially in a discourse on the death of Noah Worcester in 1837.

It does not appear to us that there are any grounds for supposing that the convictions expressed in the earlier of these writings were ever changed. The opinion as to the justifiableness of war in some cases, expressed in 1816, is repeated in 1835; and though in his tribute to the venerable founder of the Peace Societies, as Worcester may be called, he sympathizes with his abhorrence of war and love and desire of peace, he never retracts his dissent from what he regards as an extreme and untenable position. No man has spoken more strongly against the terrible evils of war, or uttered more fervent aspirations for the advent of the spirit of Christian brotherhood among nations, which alone can put an end to it. But as to the question whether Christianity

forbids war absolutely and in all cases, Channing, in his discourse of 1816, says,

"I feel myself bound to suggest an important caution. Let not the cause of peace be injured by the assertion of extreme and indefensible principles. I particularly refer to the principle, that war is absolutely, and in all possible cases, unlawful, and prohibited by Christianity. This doctrine is considered, by a great majority of the judicious and enlightened, as endangering the best interests of society; and it ought not therefore to be connected with our efforts for the diffusion of peace, unless it appear to us a clear and indubitable truth. War, as it is commonly waged, is indeed a tremendous evil; but national subjugation is a greater evil than a war of defence; and a community seems to me to possess an indisputable right to resort to such a war, when all other means have failed, for the security of its existence or freedom. It is universally admitted, that a community may employ force to repress the rapacity and violence of its own citizens, to disarm and restrain its internal foes; and on what ground can we deny to it the right of repelling the inroads and aggressions of a foreign power? If a government may not lawfully resist a foreign army, invading its territory to desolate and subdue, on what principles can we justify a resistance of a combination of its own citizens for the same injurious purpose? Government is instituted for the very purpose of protecting the community from all violence, no matter by what hands it may be offered; and rulers would be unfaithful to their trust, were they to abandon the rights, interests and improvements of society to unprincipled rapacity, whether of domestic or foreign foes.

"We are indeed told that the language of Scripture is, 'Resist not evil.' But the Scriptures are given to us as reasonable beings. We must remember, that to the renunciation of reason in the interpretation of Scripture, we owe those absurdities, which have sunk Christianity almost to the level of Heathenism. If the precept to 'Resist not evil' admit no exception, then civil government is prostrated; then the magistrate must, in no case, resist the injurious; then the subject must, in no case, employ the aid of the laws to enforce his rights. The very end and office of government is, to *resist* evil men. For this, the civil magistrate bears the sword; and he should beware of interpretations of the Scripture which would lead him to bear it in vain. The doctrine of the absolute unlawfulness of war, is thought by its advocates to be necessary to a successful opposition to this barbarous custom. But, were we employed to restore peace to a contentious neighbourhood, we should not consider ourselves as obliged to teach that self-defence is in every possible case a crime, and equally useless is this principle in our labours for the pacification of the world. Without taking this uncertain and dangerous ground, we may and ought to assail war by assailing the principles and passions which gave it birth, and by improving and exalting the moral sentiments of mankind."

In his discourse of 1835, he says,

"Still I may be asked, whether a people, however forbearing, may not sometimes owe it to its own dignity and safety to engage in war? I answer, yes. When the spirit of justice, humanity and forbearance, instead of spreading peace, provokes fresh outrage, this outrage must

be met and repressed by force. I know that many sincere Christians oppose to this doctrine the precept of Christ, 'Resist not evil.' But Christianity is wronged, and its truth exposed to strong objections, when these and the like precepts are literally construed. The whole legislation of Christ is intended to teach us the spirit from which we should act, not to lay down rules for outward conduct. The precept, 'Resist not evil,' if practised to the letter, would annihilate all government in the family and the state; for it is the great work of government to resist evil passions and evil deeds. It is indeed our duty, as Christians, to love our worst enemy, and to desire his true good; but we are to love not only our enemy, but our families, friends and country, and to take a wise care of our own rights and happiness; and when we abandon to the violence of a wrong-doer these fellow-beings and these rights, commended by God to our love and care, we are plainly wanting in that expanded benevolence which Christianity demands. A nation, then, may owe it to its welfare and dignity to engage in war, and its honour demands that it should meet the trial with invincible resolution. It ought, at such a moment, to dismiss all fear, except the fear of its own passions—the fear of the crimes to which the exasperations and sore temptations of public hostilities expose a state."

Having admitted that it may sometimes be the duty of a nation to take up arms, he lays down three conditions of an honourable war, viz., that it should be engaged in wisely, with a full consciousness of rectitude, and with unfeigned sorrow. Were it our object here to advocate the war, we think it might easily be shewn that these conditions have been fully observed by the English Government and people now. We leave this, however, to be judged of by our readers, and will close by adducing one passage only from the remarks upon the first condition, that a war should be engaged in for a wise end, observing only, that the circumstances supposed as those under which a nation should not engage in war, are so directly the opposites of those under which we are resisting Russia, that they might almost have been chosen in anticipation and justification of our present hostilities.

"To secure compensation for the past, is very seldom a sufficient object for war. The true end is, security for the future. An injury inflicted by one nation on another, may manifest a lawless, hostile spirit, from which, if unresisted, future and increasing outrages are to be feared, which would embolden other communities in wrong-doing, and against which neither property, nor life, nor liberty, would be secure. To protect a state from this spirit of violence and unprincipled aggression, is the duty of rulers, and protection may be found only in war. Here is the legitimate occasion and the true end of an appeal to arms. Let me ask you to apply this rule of wisdom to a case, the bearings of which will be easily seen. Suppose, then, an injury to have been inflicted on us by a foreign nation a quarter of a century ago. Suppose it to have been inflicted by a government which has fallen through its lawlessness, and which can never be restored. Suppose this injury to have been followed, during this long period, by not one hostile act, and not one sign of a hostile spirit. Suppose a disposition to repair it to be

expressed by the head of the new government of the injurious nation; and suppose further, that our long endurance has not exposed us to a single insult from any other power since the general pacification of Europe. Under these circumstances, can it be pretended, with any show of reason, that threatened wrong, or that future security, requires us to bring upon ourselves and the other nation the horrors and miseries of war? Does not wisdom join with humanity in reprobating such a conflict?"

M. DE SAULCY'S DISCOVERIES IN THE HOLY LAND.

The opinion expressed in this journal of the real character of these much-vaunted discoveries, has been speedily confirmed by unquestionable authority. In a paper read before the Palestine Association by the Chevalier van de Velde, of Utrecht, and of which an abstract appears in the Literary Gazette of April 22, this gentleman, who has been himself a traveller in Palestine, has shewn that the supposed ruins of Sodom are nothing more than stones which have been brought down by torrents and deposited in a row along their margin. The same explanation applies to other collections of stones, in which M. de Saulcy saw the remains of ancient cities, supposed by him to have been passed over by preceding travellers. "His fancy," says the Chevalier, "is so lively and so little conscientious, that to inquire into its productions is hardly worth the trouble." He is about to publish his own travels, in which he hopes to shew where the destroyed cities were really situated. We wish he may be as successful in this as he has been in demolishing the credit of M. de Saulcy. A writer in the last number of the Christian Examiner, evidently an oriental traveller, is not disposed to rate his discoveries much higher than we have done.

Having mentioned the Palestine Association, we cannot avoid expressing our regret that its objects should have been announced in a manner calculated to throw upon it a visionary character. The absence of inscribed monuments, of native origin, in the ancient land of the Jews, is very remarkable, when we consider the copiousness of their literature; and it is a rational undertaking to excavate the sites of ruined towns in search of such antiquities. But to hope to recover and identify the "stones of Gilgal," is little less extravagant than to seek for the remains of the Ark on Mount Ararat, or the fragments of the Tables of the Law on Horeb.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE LATE REV. JOHN GOOCH ROBBERDS.

THERE is something inexpressibly solemn, almost startling, in being called on for the first time to contemplate deliberately as a subject of history, associated now with the honoured band of the virtuous and the wise who have vanished irrevocably from earth,—the friends whose influence had entered largely into our whole consciousness of existence, and with whom, through all our most active years of life, we had been in habits of constant and kindly intercourse. It is only on such occasions that we are sensible of the depth and grandeur of sentiment which penetrates those simple words of Scripture, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh." We can well understand the feeling which has led men in all ages to look with a sort of religious veneration on the virtuous dead. Death seems to invest with a mysterious consecration those who have passed through it, and taken with them the affection and reverence of survivors into the realm of awful and unbroken silence which lies beyond it. Their human errors and frailties are forgotten, as things that have been and are no more; while the memory of all the good which they have designed and accomplished—of good which in its own nature is imperishable—seems to disengage itself from every darkening adhesion of infirmity, and to shine out from the quiet sphere where they now dwell, with a pure and unearthly lustre, for the guidance and encouragement of those who have yet a remnant of their pilgrimage to achieve. We are irresistibly impelled to compare those who are gone, with those who remain; what we have lost, with what we still preserve; what they did, with what we have now to do. If such a retrospect should in some respects be painful and depressing, it may, on the other hand, have the effect of awakening us to a deeper sense of our present responsibilities, and furnish us with a stronger incentive to emulate in Christian earnestness and fidelity the able and accomplished men who have gone before us. It is under these feelings that we offer to our readers the following brief sketch of the life and character of the excellent man and faithful minister of whom we have been recently deprived.

The late Rev. JOHN GOOCH ROBBERDS was born in the city of Norwich on the 18th of May, 1789. His family by his father's side had been connected with the Presbyterian congregation in Norwich for several generations. His great-grandfather came to Norwich immediately from London, but was of a Yorkshire family, being, it is believed, as well as his wife whose name was Whitaker, originally from Leeds. The late Mr. Robberds's father was engaged in trade at Norwich, where some members of the family attained the highest civic honours. Mr. J. W. Robberds, well known to the literary world as the biographer of the

late ingenious but eccentric William Taylor, the early friend of Southey,—as well as by some translations from the German, and a few other works,—was second cousin to the subject of this memoir.

It is always interesting to trace a connection between those who in different countries have suffered for the cause of religious truth and freedom, and to point to instances where Nonconformist worthies of the present generation have sprung from the intermingling of Puritan with Huguenot blood. Our late friend could claim this honourable distinction. His mother, whose maiden name was Harrell, descended from a French Protestant family who escaped to England at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. They settled in Norwich at the same time, it is supposed, as the Martineaus and several other families under similar circumstances,—where these refugees for conscience' sake introduced an important branch of foreign trade, and where a small place of worship, still known as the French church, was set apart and endowed for their use. The name is supposed to have been originally Harèle, but was corrupted in time into the more English form of Harrell. The name of Harrell is now extinct. The tradition was not very clear among the descendants, whether the family arrived immediately from Flanders or from Normandy; but a story was current, that their common ancestor came over in the same vessel with a little girl of whom he took much notice during the voyage, and whom he afterwards married. What her name was, is not known. Such are the dim and fading reminiscences in a later generation, of events which seemed at the time to those immediately affected by them, the all-absorbing realities of our human world, and which connect the obscure and unrecorded vicissitudes of private life, colouring the thoughts and affections of many a quiet and pious home perhaps for a century, with the grander features of social revolution that stand out distinct and prominent from the wide survey of universal history.

Mr. Robberds was placed by his father in the grammar-school of Norwich, at that time under the conduct of Dr. Forster, a man of learning and an elegant scholar, but of indolent habits, it is said, and not much of a disciplinarian. Those who would learn, he delighted to assist, but the idle he rather left to themselves. Young Robberds was his favourite pupil, and captain of the school. It was customary for the head boy to deliver a Latin oration in the porch of the school on the guild-day at the inauguration of the new Mayor; and when the late Dr. Rigby (father of the present Dr. Rigby, of London) was elected to that office, Robberds was appointed to pronounce the speech. We cannot do better than transcribe an account of the scene in the graphic language of Mr. Edward Taylor, then present, and now Professor of Music in Gresham College:

"Robberds was my junior, for I was then (though just of age)

one of the municipal body. And I well remember him, a fair boy, with almost white hair, stepping on the platform, and beginning his address, 'Prætor dignissime, Prætor designate (i.e. the Mayor elect, who was on his way from the Cathedral to the Guildhall, to be sworn into office) et Senatores omnes utriusque ordinis,' &c. &c.

"Perhaps, having but recently myself left school, I was a better judge of his composition than I should be now; but the elegance of it struck me at the time. About twenty-five years before, the present Bishop of Durham occupied the same position in the school, under Dr. Parr; both he and the Mayor to whom he addressed himself being regular attendants at the Octagon chapel, where the Bishop's father is buried." Mr. Taylor adds, in reference to his late friend: "Though long separated, we always met as old friends, and distance and time never abated (I believe I may say) our mutual regard."

At this time Mr. Robberds was about sixteen, and soon after commenced his studies for the Christian ministry in Manchester New College, then recently removed to York, under the charge of the Rev. Charles Wellbeloved, for whose character and instructions he ever retained an affectionate regard and deep respect, and who still survives to deplore the loss of a favourite pupil. He had been originally intended for business; but the late Rev. Pendlebury Houghton, who was then pastor of the Octagon chapel, and discerned the promise of his youth, induced his father to educate him for the ministry. Next to his mother, of whom he was the especial delight and pride, Mr. Houghton had perhaps the largest share in the early formation of his character and the direction of his tastes. Two evenings in the week he regularly spent with his venerable friend, besides constant intercourse at other times. Among the very few products of Mr. Robberds's pen beyond the circle of professional duty, is an elegant and characteristic Memoir of Mr. Houghton, accompanying his volume of posthumous Sermons. To Mr. Houghton's peculiar cast of mind, at once playful and contemplative, that of Mr. Robberds, with more of vigour and brilliancy, bore a considerable resemblance. The members of his family who still survive, recur with grateful and pensive pleasure to this period of his life. A very near and dear relative thus writes respecting him: "The younger children were early taught by their mother to look up to him with a love and reverence which they have retained through life; for instead of their devotion spoiling him, it only made him more brotherly and affectionate;" nor does the same writer "ever remember, even from her earliest days, one unkind word or even look, though she has a distinct recollection of so many acts and words of love during various periods of her whole life."

On the completion of his academic course, Mr. Robberds, whose superior pulpit talents had already attracted notice, re-

ceived invitations to undertake the pastoral office from two of the most important congregations in the denomination to which he belonged,—the Octagon at Norwich, and the Old chapel at Manchester. He made his election in favour of the latter; and early in the year 1811, became a co-pastor of the Cross-Street congregation with the late Rev. John Grundy. Shortly after his settlement at Manchester, he married Mary, the eldest daughter of the Rev. William Turner, then of Newcastle-upon-Tyne,—a venerable patriarch still living, who has survived all his children but one. By this alliance he was doubly bound to the duties of his sacred vocation. He was now connected with a family, rich in traditions of religious worth, each successive generation of which, almost from the commencement of Protestant Nonconformity, had furnished the church with able and faithful ministers; while in the calm religious principle and self-forgetting benevolence of his excellent partner, he secured a blessing to his home and an invaluable aid to his pastoral influence. From this period till the day of his decease, his tranquil and virtuous life offers few incidents to record. It was serenely passed in the quiet of his home, in the enjoyment of social intercourse, and in the prosecution of his ministerial studies and duties. For some years he was an instructor of youth; but not finding this occupation congenial to his taste, he at length abandoned it, and devoted his whole time and thoughts to the work of the ministry. He now commenced a career of eminent usefulness, and during the full vigour of his powers, was one of the most popular and successful preachers in the Presbyterian and Unitarian churches. On the restoration of the College from York to Manchester in the autumn of 1840, he was appointed Professor of Pastoral Theology and of the Hebrew and Syriac Languages. Failing health compelled him after some years to relinquish these additional duties. His pupils speak with lively gratitude of the uniform kindness and cordiality of his instructions, and of the admirable judgment and good taste which dictated his criticisms on their compositions. He experienced a striking and unexpected proof of the estimation in which he was held, on the death of one of his oldest hearers, the late Dr. Holme. That learned and distinguished physician, who bequeathed his valuable library and the bulk of his property to University College, London, left Mr. Robberds an estate in Westmoreland, the acquisition of which relieved his mind from pecuniary solicitude about the closing years of life, and the support of his family after his death. Mr. Robberds's habits were so simple and healthful, his temper so placid, and his spirits so uniform and lively, that his friends anticipated for him a protracted and vigorous age. Some years, however, before his decease, he began to be oppressed with a difficulty of breathing, and his outward appearance indicated gradual decline. He foresaw the result; yet in the constant

presence of death, he maintained unaltered to the last his habitual serenity and cheerfulness. On the morning of April the 21st, 1854, he was summoned from his family and the world, having completed in connection with one congregation, a long, unbroken ministry of forty-three years. How deeply he was mourned and honoured and loved, the large attendance of all ranks and parties at his grave, and the crowded, sympathizing audience which listened to the funeral sermon of his attached friend and fellow-pastor, Mr. Gaskell, abundantly attested.*

Such is the short and simple biography of a kind and good and truly Christian man. It is a tale soon told; it is summed up in the brief recital of the duties of the home and the church—in the grateful memorial of high responsibilities faithfully sustained, of pure affections religiously cherished, of superior abilities diligently cultivated and honourably employed. Except in records

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* Mr. Robberds was averse from publication, and disliked composition except in immediate connection with the duties of his office. We are not aware that he ever contributed an article to any periodical. Early in life, we believe, he read two papers before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, of which we remember to have heard good judges, the late Dr. Henry and the late Mr. Ewart, speak with much approval. But they were not printed, and we are unable now to recover their exact title. His just celebrity as a preacher caused him, however, frequently to appear before the public as an author. Exclusive of discourses delivered on domestic occasions, and printed only for private circulation, we believe the titles and dates of the more important of his publications are contained in the following list:

(1.) "On Christian Conversion;" Unitarian Fund, June 19, 1824.

(2.) "An Answer to the Lord Chancellor's Question, 'What is a Unitarian?'" July 5, 1825. [This Discourse came to a second edition.]

(3.) "Christ One with God;" Western Unitarian Society, July 18, 1827.

(4.) "The Duty of Christians to seek the Improvement of their Fellow-men;" Newcastle Unitarian Tract Society, August 23, 1829.

(5.) "Christians the best Name for Disciples of Christ;" Sunderland, Aug. 30, 1829.

(6.) "The Need of more and better Provision for Popular Education."

(7.) "The One and Vital Faith of Christians;" Western Unitarian Society, August 16, 1837.

(8.) "The Duty of a Christian Church in relation to the World;" Opening of Upper Brook-Street Chapel, Manchester, September 1, 1839.

(9.) "The Voice of the Dead;" Death of Dr. Channing, Cross Street, Nov. 13, 1842.

(10.) "The Value of Energy in Union with Benevolence;" Death of Sir Thomas Potter, Cross Street, 1845.

(11.) "The Importance of Conscientiousness in the Use of Influence;" Death of Mr. J. E. Taylor, Cross Street, January 14, 1844.

(12.) "A Word for Charity amidst many Words for Creeds."

(13.) "The Fishers of Men;" Unitarian Association, Essex Street, London, June 3, 1846.

(14.) "Popery in all Churches, the proper Object of Protestant Antagonism;" Cross Street, Nov. 17, 1850.

(15.) "On the Prevailing Charges against Unitarians;" Norwich, Eastern Unitarian Society, June 28, 1820.

The Memoir of Mr. Houghton has been already alluded to. Besides these, there are two Sermons on "Vain Thoughts," and two on "Temper," published in Dr. Beard's volumes of Discourses; a Sermon "On the Two Natures in Christ," of which the date cannot be found; and another "On the Love of Knowledge conducive to Happiness and Virtue," preached for the Cambridge-Street Sunday-schools, Birmingham, July 29, 1838.

of the necessary discharge of professional or public duty, it never wanders from the quiet and sequestered path of private life, and presents nothing to enrich the page of the historian or fill a place in the annals of literature. Of a man so richly gifted as Mr. Robberds, we may regret that so little should remain to tell coming generations who and what he was. But this consideration has its redeeming and compensatory aspect. The best and happiest lives—those which steal with silent blessing through the world, and to the distant eye give no sign of their existence but in the brighter verdure which marks their hidden course—are often those of which there is the least to record. Mr. Robberds, above most men of equal ability whom we have ever known—too much, perhaps, for his just reputation in the field of letters and authorship—had a calm and dignified contempt for the vulgar ambition and restless craving after notoriety, which impels so many inferior minds to rush into print and display themselves continually in the public eye. With true religious wisdom, he accepted life as a precious boon, a sacred deposit, from the great and good Father of the universe—not to be feverishly consumed amidst endless bustle and excitement, but to be steadily enriched and adorned with Christian duty, and tranquilly enjoyed with Christian thankfulness and trust. With an eye reverently fixed on its inevitable termination, he spent it gladly and gratefully, as a season of discipline and preparation for the future life, which to his clear, untroubled vision of faith, was a reality as distinct and assured as the present. Few minds were more habitually under the influence of that silent beauty and indwelling poetry which quiet and loving natures detect under the commonest aspects of things; and this quintessence of life—these precious drops from the inmost fountain of being—he had exquisite skill in drawing forth from all scenes and out of every passing event, and distilling day by day into the ordinary cup of human experience. This habitual self-surrender to the gentle and pleasant influences of existence, left at times on the beholder an impression of indolence, and almost of indifference to the pressing concerns of the world. And it must be admitted, he had a constitutional aversion to all constrained and artificial effort—to all over-excitement of the faculties. Yet he would have been unfairly and inadequately described as an indolent man. The principle of duty was powerful and steady in his character. Professional calls he regarded as his first obligation, and never neglected. When these were efficiently discharged, his view of life made it a religious duty to keep his mind free from turmoil and agitation, and to nurse it with the quiet and holy thoughts which come, whenever they are sought, day by day from the Parent Spirit to the devout and expectant mind. In the distribution of his time and the prosecution of his daily duties, he was orderly and systematic. A portion of every day was passed in his library, in

studies which bore more or less directly on his sacred vocation. Though he never affected the character of a severe student, the steady uniformity of his application enabled him to execute a great deal in the course of a long ministerial life, and to familiarize himself with those branches of learning which furnish the accomplished minister of Christ. He had closely studied the Scriptures in the original Hebrew and Greek, and was well acquainted with the Syriac version. At one time of his life, he had also studied with much care the doctrinal questions at issue between different Christian Churches. Of this, many of his published sermons are a convincing proof. But his natural tastes—we may add, his distinguishing gifts—did not attract him to the polemics of divinity. Whatever he has done in this way (and what he did, he did excellently well), was altogether dictated by a sense of professional duty; and perhaps few men, not by nature controversially disposed, have preached in the course of their ministry more earnestly and more effectively on important controversial points. But he had too refined and catholic a spirit, and too deep a sense of what was beautiful in the common faith and life of all genuine Christianity, to insist with any eagerness, except when compelled in self-defence or self-vindication, on the speculative dogmas which separate good and religious men. It was on the permanent and the universal in Christian truth that he loved to dwell—that deep, eternal substratum of heavenly trust and hope, which underlies the torn and tumbled surface of sectarian strife, and will endure, grand, solid, unchanged, when all this has been broken up and swept away. It was significant of the spirit which swayed his whole religious life, and which gathered new strength as he advanced in years, that he took for the motto of one of his later printed discourses, Vincentius's well-known definition of catholic Christianity—*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.* Nor had he failed to make himself acquainted with the more important results of German theology, and would sometimes, when young men were astonishing their unlearned hearers with novel theories, remind them, with good-humoured and characteristic pleasantry, that he knew where they had got those stolen goods. The metaphysical subtleties, the vague abstractions, the elaborate minuteness, the vast but ponderous erudition of the Germans, were little, it must be confessed, in harmony with his peculiar constitution of mind. He had nothing of the mere antiquary or of the dry metaphysician in his composition. All things, to have value and beauty in his eye, must be in contact with human realities, and tinged with the colour of human affections. To this intellectual temperament must be ascribed his extreme fondness for the literature of fiction, especially when it was pure, kindly and graceful, and that happy alchemy of mind by which he could extract from its gayest and most humorous pages, some elements of a diviner wisdom to give

sweetness and geniality to the earnest words of the preacher. His was peculiarly an English mind. He had its calm good sense, its playful humour, its pure and healthy tastes, its quiet, home-born relish of innocent enjoyment. Though a sound and ripe scholar, well read in general learning and versed in the proper studies of his profession, yet it was English literature which he specially loved, and with which he was most intimately familiar; it was English learning, that of our great divines and moralists, which he had most deeply studied; and it was amidst our English scenery that he delighted to wander. With a passionate fondness for the picturesque, he never once quitted our own shores in search of it. Our rich and cultured vales, chequered with meadow and corn land, with pleasant homesteads and village spires nestling among the trees, our sheltered glens, our brooks dashing over their rocky beds, our sweet and placid lakes shut in by grassy slopes and mountain heads,—these were the sources from which his mind fed itself with beauty, and he asked for nothing more; these sufficed for his utmost contentment, and filled his pure mind with a sense of ineffable joy. It was delightful to witness his thorough enjoyment of such scenes—how he seemed to imbibe the loveliness that was around him at every pore—his even, measured step and tranquil bearing, which seemed fearful of dispersing it by one harsh or restless or anxious thought—and that beaming look which reflected the peace within, and said expressively, "I want no higher bliss than this converse with God in the silent beauty of his works."

Nowhere did he appear to greater advantage than at his own fireside, or in the society of a few familiar friends, where he could thoroughly unbend and give the rein to his inexhaustible pleasantry. On such occasions he was a charming companion. His wit gushed forth sportive and free at every turn, splashing right and left with indiscriminate hilarity, but withal so kindly and genial, that the memory of those happy hours when it played and sparkled in the sunshine of friendship and refreshed the hearts on which it fell, is one of unmingled delightfulness, and for all who ever shared them, will remain among the brightest spots in their retrospect of the past. Though too much indisposed to all studied effort, to aim at the higher achievements of conversational talent, and too averse to the very semblance of strife, ever to signalize himself in argument, yet his society was sought and valued by some distinguished men; for he had a happy readiness of expression, and his manners were courteous and dignified. The late Dr. Parr always noticed him with marked friendliness during his visits to Manchester, and sometimes heard him preach. On one of these occasions, a stiff Churchman, somewhat scandalized that the Doctor should sanction a conventicle with his presence, asked sarcastically, "Well, Doctor, where will you go next?" "To heaven, Sir, I hope," was the reply, "if I follow

that young man's precepts." Parr was accustomed to cite Mr. Robberds, with some others, as a proof that the Unitarian ministry was not illiterate.

By habits of admirable order and wise economy, Mr. Robberds was enabled with a limited income to exercise through a long life a liberal hospitality, and wherever the assistance of his fellow-creatures was concerned, to practise a generous and ungrudging charity. As a preacher, he possessed some striking excellences. His style was clear, simple and purely English, interspersed at times with passages of great beauty and vivid picturesque effect. In his early years it had more of that finished elegance which belongs to the essay; but latterly he had purposely rendered it colloquial and even homely, more resembling that of a speaker than of a writer. We heard him once remark, that he was well aware his style had suffered from this cause; but, with true conscientiousness, he had sacrificed all literary considerations to the one desire of pastoral usefulness. His voice was deep and sonorous, and his manner in the pulpit remarkably easy, dignified and self-possessed. He was singularly happy in seizing upon the passing events of the day, and giving them an ingenious and instructive application. Few men excelled him in enforcing the devotional and practical aspects of religion. When deeply moved by his subject, he became solemnly impressive. The late Dr. Henry Ware, of Boston, U.S., considered him, we have been told, to be the best preacher whom he had heard in England.

His religious views represented what is called the older phase of Unitarianism. In his estimate of the external evidences of Christianity and of the authority of Scripture, he agreed, we believe, essentially with the able and learned men who formed and guided the public opinion of our churches in the early part of this century,—especially with the late Dr. Carpenter. But he thought for himself, and was no follower of a school. His religion had its source in the conscience and the heart, nursed there by a devout and habitual study of the Bible. With him religion was a principle of faith and life, resting on the broad and overt facts of human consciousness and experience. Philosophical systems and metaphysical theories he little cared to examine, for he thought that one only prepared the way for another. Indeed, abstract speculation was neither in accordance with his tastes nor particularly suited to his class of mental endowments. Yet there was a breadth and catholicity in his spirit, which at once fitted and disposed him to recognize the presence of sincere and availing religion under the most opposite forms of opinion. His was one of those kindly and genial natures, ever inclined to pass a favourable judgment and to look on the bright side of things, which are of inestimable service in periods of rapid transition, when antagonism is strong, and divergences run

wide, for mediating between extreme parties, and bringing them to see the many precious truths which they still hold in common. Such a mind we have now lost. Such minds we can ill afford to lose. They have been taken from us with a fearful rapidity of late. How shall we replace their calm, experienced wisdom, their ripe and scholarly judgment on questions of theology and the church, their social influence and courtesy, their gentle but earnest piety, their devout and tolerant charity? The memory which such minds leave behind them, is the richest tribute to their virtues. It is not shut up in a book, or attached to a world-wide name, but is a living power of strong and present action on the narrow circle of attached and sympathizing hearts that have known them and loved them; not raised aloft into the wide firmament of literary renown, like some distant, insulated star, worshiped from below with cold and joyless eye, but lingering still among survivors with a moral warmth and lustre which touches everything it rests upon with a hue of love—till the light that remains, and the lives that cherish it, grow dim and pale together, and all who have rejoiced and mourned with each other—all who have had common hopes and remembrances—on earth, are wrapped at length in the shade of a common oblivion—destined, as we trust, to awake again to mutual recognition on the morning of that brighter day whose sun shall go down no more. T.

LINES

Suggested by the Words in Tayler's "Christian Aspects of Faith and Duty" (Note, p. 344):

"Κάμνουσα ψυχὴ ἐγγύς ἐστι θεοῦ,
A labouring soul is near to God.
Words traditionally ascribed to the Apostle Peter on the authority of Gregory Nazianzen."

Near to its God the suffering soul
The higher soars from deeper grief;
On rushing, darkening sorrows roll,
And prayer alone can seek relief.

Thus doth it pierce the thickened gloom,
Rise through the dark and swelling sea,
Fearless, though death-cries round it boom,—
Its haven where God's chosen flee.

The darkness opens for its wings,
They dash the pangs and fears aside;
Regenerate in strength, it flings
A crested light on rock and tide.

Now aiming at day's golden sphere,
It leaves below each mortal thrall;
The vision, searching, full and clear,
Beholds its God—the all in all.

March 13, 1854. H. G.

THE PLURALITY OF WORLDS.*

We plead guilty to the charge of having hitherto believed in a plurality of worlds. Ever since we passed out of our early faith, that the stars were pretty little lamps hung out in the sky for the use of people travelling in the dark,—ever since we learned that those glittering points were globes of matter as large as our whole earth, and some of them much larger, we have had a very decided impression that they might also contain seas, rivers, mountains, plants, animals, men—of course under new conditions and adaptations. As our world, seen from Mars or Venus, would appear to be no more than a small wandering star, the inference naturally arises that those apparently small wandering stars may turn out to be worlds like this. Such, at any rate, is the way in which ordinary mortals reason. That those mighty orbs of creation, which spread around us on every side, should be nothing other than vast uninhabitable deserts, molten masses of fire, or dreary wastes of water, seems, to say the least, exceedingly improbable. Placed so far apart as the heavenly bodies are, and exercising so slight an influence upon each other, it certainly looks as if each were a self-contained world, created for its own sake, endowed with a special physical constitution, and fitted for its own peculiar systems of life. Most men feel, too, that this thought receives a religious confirmation. They are unwilling to admit that the wisdom and beneficence of God are bounded by the limits of this earth: they think it most consistent with the Infinite Spirit of Beauty and Good, that He should fill every province of creation with witnesses of His power, clothe every sphere with its own harmonies and utilities, make every mansion of the heavens a meet home for beauty, affection, glowing thought and loving worship.

It is possible, however, that in all this we may be mistaken. The book before us is an attempt to shew that we are so—that there are no sufficient grounds for this belief. The notion that other stellar worlds may be the abodes of animal and intellectual life, is a mere popular delusion, without any real foundation to rest upon. What slight scientific presumptions we have, are all on the other side.

The argument of this "Essay" is very skilfully conducted, shewing the author to be a man of no ordinary ability and research, one evidently familiar with the facts and theories both of physical and metaphysical science. We cannot say, however, that we are satisfied with the conclusions in which he lands us, and in spite of his ingenious speculations, we are still disposed to cling to the rejected creed. But it may be as well to reserve our observations until we have given as full an account as possible of the view contained in this remarkable book.

The ground traversed may be very well understood from the

* Of the Plurality of Worlds; an Essay. London—Parker and Son. 1853.

following headings: Chap. I. Astronomical Discoveries. II. Astronomical Objection to Religion. III. The Answer from the Microscope. IV. Further Statement of the Difficulty. V. Geology. VI. The Argument from Geology. VII. The Nebulæ. VIII. The Fixed Stars. IX. The Planets. X. Theory of the Solar System. XI. The Argument from Design. XII. The Unity of the World. XIII. The Future. The gist of the work is perhaps contained in Chapters VIII., IX. and X., which we shall endeavour to lay before our readers.

The writer begins by mentioning various recent observations which tend to identify the nature of the Nebulæ with that of cometary matter: the latter is proved to be of extremely small density, and to have scarcely any weight or inertia. Of course he speedily clears away any imagined dwellers from such shadowy bodies as these. He then advances to the Fixed Stars, and examines the probability of their containing in themselves, or in their supposed accompanying planets, inhabitants of any kind. The only reason we have for even entertaining such a notion is, that each fixed star is conceived to be of the nature of our sun. But this is a mere conjecture, and there are many indications that it is a false one; such, for instance, as the ascertained tenuity of much of the luminous matter in the skies; the existence of double stars and clustered stars, and periodical stars exhibiting motions totally unlike those which prevail in our quarter of the heavens; and the appearance of great internal changes in the stars, indicated by their varying colour, which is inconsistent with the idea of permanent systems. From these and other considerations, he thinks it likely that most of the fixed stars may be only loose masses of matter, bearing little or no resemblance to the sun; and that "it will be time enough to speculate about the inhabitants which belong to such systems, when we have ascertained that there are such planets."

"The reasonable view of the matter appears to be this. The assumption that the Fixed Stars are of exactly the same nature as the Sun, was, at first, when their vast distance and probable great size were newly ascertained, a bold guess, to be confirmed or refuted by subsequent observations and discoveries. Any appearances tending in any degree to confirm this guess, would have deserved the most considerate attention. But there has not been a vestige of any such confirmatory fact. No planet, nor anything which can fairly be regarded as indicating the existence of a planet revolving about a star, has anywhere been discerned. The discovery of Nebulæ, of binary systems of the varying and accelerated periods of such stars, all seem to point the other way."—P. 165.

Having settled that we have no reason to believe in habitable globes, beyond our own system at least, he next advances to the Planets, in order to determine what capabilities they have for supporting life. As in regard to the fixed stars the argument from analogy depends on their being proved to be *like the sun*, so in respect to the planets the strength of their case rests on

their being shewn to be *like the earth.* But here, again, there are several facts and a great many probabilities against us. Take Jupiter, for example. From all the evidence that can be collected, he appears to be a mere sphere of water. His density is one quarter that of the earth, about the density of water: his polar and equatorial diameters are in the proportion of 13 to 14, precisely the amount of oblateness which on mechanical principles would result from the time of his revolution, if he were fluid throughout: his belts are best accounted for by considering them masses of cloud, raised from a watery sphere by the action of the sun, and changing their forms from slight causes: finally, the weight of bodies at the surface of Jupiter is two-and-a-half times greater than at the surface of the Earth, while the light and heat are only one-twenty-fifth part of what we possess, thus certainly removing this planet from the analogy of the Earth.

"Taking into account, then, these circumstances in Jupiter's state; his (probably) bottomless waters; his light, if any solid materials; the strong hand with which gravity presses down such materials as there are; the small amount of light and heat which reaches him at five times the Earth's distance from the Sun;—what kind of inhabitants shall we be led to assign him? Can they have skeletons, where no substance so dense as bone is found, at least in large masses? It would seem not probable. And it would seem they must be dwellers in the waters, for against the existence there of solid land, we have much evidence. They must, with so little of light and heat, have a low degree of vitality. They must, then, it would seem, be cartilaginous and glutinous masses, peopling the waters with minute forms, perhaps also with larger monsters; for the weight of a bulky creature floating in the fluid would be much more easily sustained than on solid ground. I do not know whether the advocates of peopled worlds will think such a population as this worth contending for; but I think the only doubt can be between such a population and none. If Jupiter be a mere mass of water, with perhaps a few cinders at the centre, and an envelope of clouds round it, it seems very possible that he may not be the seat of life at all. But if life be there, it does not seem in any way likely that the living beings can be anything higher in the scale of being than such boneless, watery, pulpy creatures as I have imagined."—P. 183.

The cases of Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, it is evident, must be much worse. What kind of dwelling-places shall we make of planets whose amount of light and heat is diminished to one-100th, one-400th and one-900th part of the earth's? Their density is also very small, Saturn being not much heavier than cork, and Uranus about the weight of deal; in short, the only supposition left for us is, that a large portion of these globes is vapour.

Turning next to the inferior planets, Mercury and Venus, the same difficulty is experienced, though from an opposite cause. Unlike the superior planets, they are evidently solid bodies,—the former being considerably more and the latter somewhat less dense than the Earth; but there is no appearance of ocean or

continent upon them, nor any trace of a watery or gaseous atmosphere around them. It is certain that without this appendage they cannot be habitable globes; while the fact that Venus receives twice and Mercury seven times as much light and heat as the Earth, seems to place them beyond the conditions of any modes of life that we can imagine.

"It is hard to say what kind of animals we could place in her (Venus), if we were disposed to people her surface; perhaps the microscopic creatures with siliceous coverings, which, as modern explorers assert, are almost indestructible by heat. To believe that she has a surface like the earth, and tribes of animals, like terrestrial animals, and like man, is an exercise of imagination which is not only quite gratuitous, but contrary to all the information which the telescope gives us. If it is so difficult to find suitable inhabitants for Venus, the difficulty for Mercury is immensely greater."—P. 192.

Lastly, take the case of the Moon. She is, of course, by far the nearest of the heavenly bodies, and affords us the best opportunity of determining her physical condition; for, with the powerful telescopes now in use, we can see her as distinctly as if she were only a few hundred miles distant. Now the Moon is proved to be totally without either air or water. She has mountains and basins and valleys of extraordinary shapes; she exhibits strong evidences of having been the theatre of volcanic action, but that action has long since passed away; her fires are now certainly burnt out; her volcanoes extinct. She is one vast mass of rigid and barren rock; no vegetation clothes her naked slopes, no air softens the shade of her deep hollows, no clouds float around her jagged peaks, and it is impossible to believe that any living form or sound breaks the awful silence upon her surface. Such is the Moon.

And thus our author, commencing at the outskirts of creation, at the furthest of the heavenly bodies, sweeps round and round in a continually-narrowing circle, until at length he reaches the nearest, without being able to find any traces of existence such as we see it in our planet. He "drops the plummet down the broad, deep universe," and finds no life. All is void. The fixed stars are masses of luminous matter, of greater or less size; the outer planets are mere oceans of vapour; Jupiter is a sphere of water; Venus is a smooth round ball of clay; Mercury, of metal; and the Moon, a globe of "rigid slag"! In the Earth alone do we find a *world,* the habitation of vegetable and animal tribes, the dwelling-place of conscious and intelligent beings.

And does the writer expect us to believe this? Undoubtedly he does; and he has, moreover, a theory of the solar system which is very striking and ingenious. We give it in his own words, as perhaps the best specimen of the manner and matter of the book:

"What is the peculiar physical condition which we are led to ascribe to the Earth? Plainly this: that she is situated just in that region of

the system where the existence of matter, both in a solid, fluid and gaseous condition, is possible. Outside the Earth's orbit, or at least outside Mars and the small planetoids, there is in the planets, apparently, no solid matter; or rather, if there be, there is a vast preponderance of watery and vaporous matter. Inside the Earth's orbit, we see, in the planets, no traces of water or vapor or gas; but solid matter, about the density of terrestrial matter. The Earth alone is placed at the border where the conditions of life are combined; ground to stand upon; air to breathe; water to nourish vegetables, and thus animals; and solid matter to supply the materials for their more solid parts; and this with a due supply of light and heat, a due energy of the force of weight. All these conditions are, in our conception, requisite for life; that all these conditions meet, elsewhere than in the neighbourhood of the Earth's orbit, we see strong reasons to disbelieve. The Earth, then, it would seem, is the abode of life, not because all the globes which revolve round the Sun may be assumed to be the abodes of life, but because the Earth is fitted to be so by a curious and complex combination of properties and relations, which do not at all apply to the others. That the Earth is inhabited, is not a reason for believing that the other planets are so, but for believing that they are not so." * * * "*The Earth's Orbit is the Temperate Zone of the Solar System.* In that Zone only is the play of Hot and Cold, of Moist and Dry, possible. The Torrid Zone of the Earth is not free from moisture; it has its rains, for it has its upper colder atmosphere. But how much hotter are Venus and Mercury than the Torrid Zone? There, no vapors can linger; they are expelled by the fierce solar energy; and there is no cool stratum to catch them and return them. If they were there, they must fly to the outer regions; to the cold abodes of Jupiter and Saturn, if on their way the Earth did not, with cold and airy finger outstretched afar, catch a few drops of their treasures for the use of plant and beast and man. The solid stone only, and the metallic ore which can be fused and solidified with little loss of substance, can bear the continual force of the near solar fire, and be the material of permanent solid planets in that region. But the lava pavement of the Inner Planets bears no superstructure of life; for all life would be scorched away along with water, its first element. On the Earth first can this superstructure be raised; and there, through we know not what gradation of forms, the waters were made to bring forth abundantly things that had life. And so, nourished by the influences of air and water, plants and animals lived and died, and were entombed in the scourings of the land, which the descending streams carried to the bottom of the waters. And then these beds of dead generations were raised into mountain ranges; perhaps by the yet unextinguished forces of subterraneous fires. And then a new creation of plants and animals succeeded, still living under the fostering influence of the united pair, Air and Water, which never ceased to brood over the world of life, their nurseling; and then perhaps a new change of the limits of land and water, and a new creation again; till at last Man was placed upon the Earth, with far higher powers and far different purposes from any of the preceding tribes of creatures, and with this for one of his offices—that there might be an intelligent being to learn how wonderfully the scheme of creation had been carried on, and to admire and to worship the Creator." Pp. 195—197.

(To be concluded in the next No.)

LETTERS AND PAPERS OF REV. JOHN SEDDON. No. II.*

The letter that follows is without address, and is a copy; but the original was without doubt intended for Rev. Ralph Astley, the Presbyterian minister of Whitehaven (grandfather of Rev. Richard Astley, of Shrewsbury), who died March 30th, 1756. He went to Whitehaven, December 23, 1726, and received a call from the people in the following February. He was, it is believed by his descendants, an Arian.

Rev. John Seddon to Rev. Ralph Astley.

Warrington, April 22nd, 1754.

Rev. and dear Sir,—It was my great misfortune the last time you paid a visit to your friends in Lancashire, to enjoy extreamly little of your agreeable company and conversation. It was in Manchester, I think, I met you accidentally, when you were just going to leave the town, and I was solliciting subscriptions in favour of an academy, an affair then entirely in its infancy. The same design still employs the thoughts of many of our principal gentlemen in this country, and is indeed the occasion of the troubles I am now giving you. The erecting a publick academy upon an open, generus plan, and herein providing for the genteel and liberal education of youth upon the most easy and reasonable terms, was a design which all our good friends amongst the Dissenters, and many gentlemen of freedom and candour in the Establishment, heartily approv'd and wished to see carried into execution. It was look'd upon to have a very friendly influence upon the general interests of learning, by rendering its most valueable and important branches easy to be obtain'd by the generality of young persons, even by such as were rather below the middle ranks of life, and with much superior advantages than cou'd be had under the single direction of a private tutor. It seem'd to promise also a favourable effect in the further progress of true religion and religious liberty; as the purest and most rational notions of the one, and the extensive and catholick ideas of the other, wou'd undoubtedly be encouraged in every proper method by the gentlemen that wou'd be employ'd in the conducting of it; and in this light it was thought a design well calculated not only for those that were to appear in the ministerial character, but for such as might afterwards direct their views to the other learned professions, that might engage in a commercial life, or for some young gentlemen of fortune who might be called to the service of their country in the more publick scenes of life. It was the lamented loss of several of our worthy and eminent tutors, and the visible necessity of some provision of this sort, especially in the North of England, that gave the first rise to this design; it was not only the few, but everybody was struck with a sense of the same necessity; and to this it was undoubtedly owing that the first proposal of this plan was receiv'd in so favourable a manner. The gentlemen at Manchester began the subscription, and distinguished themselves by their usual generosity and public spirit. It was then carried to Liverpool, and afterwards to Birmingham; and

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* Continued from p. 240.

the amount at present is considerably above £200 per annum, besides several considerable benefactions that are promised towards establishing a fund: applications are at this time making in all the considerable and wealthy towns in Yorkshire, under the influence of the principal gentlemen there, which 'tis hoped will obtain very considerable additions to our subscriptions. The plan proposed is indeed pretty large, and will not be executed without considerable expense; but as it is a general and not a private and not a local concern, as it is calculated for the support of those common interests of Liberty and Virtue and Christianity in which all good men are deeply concern'd, 'tis hoped the attention to it will be general, and the encouragement bear some proportion to the importance of the object, and to the generosity which this age is justly celebrated for in other instances.—I have enclosed a few of our Proposals, which you'll please to peruse, and communicate to such gentlemen of your acquaintance as you think proper. I doubt not you'll think favourably of the design itself; but if there are any little hints that occur to you relative to the further conduct and improvement of it, we shall receive them with the greatest pleasure; and especially if you'll be so kind as to give it your sanction and influence, we are assured of the good effect it will have, and shall be highly oblig'd to you for it. My good friend Mr. Hart, who is the bearer of this, is a sensible man, has the success of this scheme much at heart, and will chearfully give you what further account of it he can.—I beg my compliments to Mr. Wilkinson, who I think is the only one I'm personally acquainted with in Whitehaven. I heartily wish the long continuance of your health and usefulness; and, with the highest esteem, am, dear Sir, your affectionate and obedient,

J. Seddon.

P. S. I should be glad to be favoured with a line in return to this at some leisure hour.

There is a paper of the date of July 11, 1754, what appears to be a copy of a circular letter designed for circulation amongst persons of influence. It is signed by Daniel Bayley, John Lees (afterwards Sir Caryll Worsley), and seven others. The subscriptions then promised are thus stated:

Manchester	£94	10	0
Liverpool	46	4	0
Birmingham	44	12	6
Warrington	31	15	6
	£217	2	0

From one paragraph in the statement, it appears that the founders of the academy contemplated also the possible formation of a fund for the relief of necessitous and deserving ministers,—a scheme never fulfilled at Warrington, but subsequently, through the benevolence of the late Mr. Samuel Jones, to some extent fulfilled in connection with Manchester New College. The statement of the founders is—"That we at present make it a part of our view, if a surplus should remain after the design of the academy is fully compleated, that it be employed, under the

direction of the Trustees, for the relief of such ministers whose circumstances and characters may render them the worthy objects of regard." This part of the plan attracted the notice of several friends of the academy in different parts of the country, and a recommendation of the entire plan was signed at Warrington, May 1754, by Mr. Mottershead, of Manchester; Mr. Thomas Braddock, of Bury; Mr. Brekell, of Liverpool; and Mr. John Bent, of Chorley; at Chester, Aug. 19, by John Gardner; at Shrewsbury, Aug. 21, by Mr. Orton and Mr. Fownes; and at Bristol, Sept. 5, by Mr. Richards, Mr. Jillard and Mr. Harson.

Rev. Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, to Rev. John Seddon.

Manchester, July 29, 1754.

Dear and Rev. Sir,—I thank you for your friendly concern about my legg. We have not yet quite extirpated the escar, though the operator this morning cut and clipt in the wound for the seventh time, and by my own feeling, and the blood which issued forth, convinc'd me that he was got to the quick in those places where he made incisions. But more work of this kind remains to be perform'd, till the escar is intirely removed, and then, he assures me, the breach will heal with ease and speed. I wait the issue with patience and resignation.

The gentlemen met at Mr. Rigby's last Thursday evening, viz. Messrs. Bailey, Touchet (Peter), Nelson, Hyde, Lees, Dr. Kay. I shew'd 'em the new list we drew up at Warrington, and the several places to which you and I had undertaken to carry or send Proposals, inclosed in the printed letter, marked with asterisms in the list. They judg'd that a written letter from some of the gentlemen whose names are annexed to the printed letter, should accompany the Proposals, &c. I gave it as my opinion that such written letters would not improperly, and with the same effect, follow the Proposals and printed letters delivered by us. In which they were pleased to acquiesce, and agreed to have a meeting this week, in which they would go over the new list, and every gentleman would undertake to send Proposals, printed letters and written letters of his own, to such places and gentlemen as they are acquainted with; which I doubt not they will perform, and heartily wish and hope their endeavours may be attended with success. The list is in Mr. Lee's hands. I sent him your letter, and he hath inserted the new names you mention. I am confined, and shall be this whole week. I wish your affairs would permit your being present at Manchester. My service to Mr. Bent, Lee, and all inquiring friends. I shall always remember your kind and friendly usage at Warrington with pleasure and gratitude.

I am, dear Sir, your sincerely affectionate brother,

JOHN TAYLOR.

In the letter that follows, a somewhat disparaging notice is taken of Lord Willoughby of Parham. He afterwards became a very friendly patron of the academy, and was its first President.

Ellis Bent, Esq., to Rev. John Seddon.

Warrington, 12th September, 1754.

Sir,—I receiv'd your agreeable favour. I would have wrote you

sooner; but I have been the week past at Liverpoole, discharging the ship Warrington's cargoe, which is at last arrived safe. I am glad you had so pleasant a journey, and that you have made some addition to your subscriptions. I hope you met with the desired success at Bristol, and that every where you'll find a readiness to encourage so generous and good a design. I find by uncle Bent (who is now at Warrington with us) that Mr. Tennent did not meet with any encouragement from my Lord Willoughby. He either found or knew him to be, what you suspected of him, narrow and rigid in his principles, and upon which account he had little to do with him. He was surprised to see his proposals recommended by some of our ministers in London. We observe with concern the melancholy situation you found your brother in. I heartily wish your accounts of him were more favourable; his condition must be indeed a very afflicting one. * * *

Wishing for your return, I remain, Sir, your affectionate, humble servant, ELLIS BENT.

Rev. Dr. John Taylor to Rev. John Seddon.

Norwich, Sept. 23, 1754.

My dear Friend,—Through the Divine goodness, I am got well to Norwich, and my leg is finely healed. The Proposals and letters sent by me I delivered at the respective places to which they were directed, and found every where a favourable reception, with an approbation of the scheme; which, as I was inform'd at *Darby* and *Nottingham*, is an old scheme, propos'd several years ago, and Dr. Secker, the present Bishop of Oxford, but then a Dissenter, was consider'd as the most proper person for Divinity Professor. But as there were at that time two or three academies subsisting in the North, the affair was treated with more indifference than I hope it will be at present. The Trustees of Lady *Huly's* Fund have hitherto allow'd an exhibition of £40 per ann. for the education of four ministers. In my own thoughts I judged they would be willing to allow the same to your new projected academy; and at Lincoln, meeting with one of them, Mr. *Flower*, of Gainsborough, I was confirm'd in my opinion. For when I mention'd the exhibition, as above, from Lady *Huly's* Fund, and signify'd my hopes that it would be transferr'd to the new academy, he readily answer'd, he did not doubt but it would. It would therefore surely be right for the gentlemen at Manchester to write to him and the other Trustees about it. The Presbyterian Fund also at London have for many years made handsome allowances to the Northern academies; and I would hope, if apply'd to, they would allow something to this. I shall be glad to hear how you have succeeded in your journey to Bristol. Would it not be right for the Manchester gentlemen to send some proper person to the several places where the Proposals, &c. have been sent? I should think, the sooner the better. Pray my service to any of them as you happen to see them. Your continued activity and address, I am persuaded, is of great importance. But the carrying on the work of my Concordance loudly calls upon me to fall to vigorously, and to keep to it closely. I can add no more, only in the greatest throng of business and closest application of thought, I shall always remember your very friendly treatment at Warrington with pleasure

and gratitude. Compliments to Mr. Bent and all the gentlemen who honour'd me with their company at your house.

I am, dear Sir, your greatly obliged and sincerely affectionate brother, JOHN TAYLOR.

Appended to this letter are a few lines from Dr. Taylor's worthy colleague.

Rev. Samuel Bourn to Rev. John Seddon.

Dear Sir,—I have only time to desire the favor of you, when you write to Mr. Taylor, an account of academic affairs, which letter I shall have the pleasure of reading. You will at the same time remember your old friend, and write to me an account of any other affairs you may think worth relating. I wrote to you a month ago in some small hopes I might have had the great pleasure of meeting you at Birmingham; but all my hopes now are confined to a letter from you; and if it will be any satisfaction, I promise a long one in return, tho' I don't know what I can fill it with that can afford you any amusement.

Yours, S. B.

P. S. It diverts me to think that our scheme is now discovered to have been *an old one.*

Rev. Dr. John Taylor to Rev. John Seddon.

Norwich, Jan. 20, 1755.

My dear Friend,—Whom I much respect and esteem, the date of this would not have been at so great a distance from yours of Oct. 19, had I not till now been very closely ingaged in compleating the plan of my Concordance, which now, I thank God, is finished. Nothing remains but the correcting of the sheets as they come from the press, which has gone on with all possible expedition, and I hope will continue to do so. And yet I fear it will be near a twelvemonth before the whole will be finished. I am pleased to find by yours that the proposed scheme of an academy is so well approved by those who are able to contribute to its support, and especially that Lord Willoughby and so many of Harry Houghton's family are come into the subscription. I am inform'd by a Londoner that Mr. Chandler's scheme is not like to take effect; and that the gentlemen of *Bristol*, when your academy was proposed to their consideration, form'd a design of erecting one of their own upon the same plan. But they could make no progress in it. I am persuaded Lancashire is the only part of England in which so good a design can succeed; and there, by the blessing of God, I hope it will succeed. As to the places I passed through, I could not, by reason of my legg, which then was not quite healed, walk about to confer with particular gentlemen at Darby or Nottingham, the two principal places; but I hope, if once the thing were set on foot, assistance would come from both those towns. The same may be depended upon in these parts. But *Norwich* must lead the way, where the proposal meets with good approbation; but we are so deeply ingaged in the expensive affair of building our new chapple, for which we are every quarter making repeated collections, that when I proposed to make application, the gentlemen judg'd it quite improper at present, and more likely to disserve than to assist the design; but all agree it

ought to be encourag'd. In the funeral sermon which I preach'd for Mr. Finch, lately deceased, who had been pastor of our congregation for 63 years, being 91 when he died, I took occasion to mention the affair of the academy in this manner:—"There is one thing I cannot forbear mentioning; Mr. *Finch* was one of the first pupils* that entered into the first Dissenting academy that was erected after the *Restauration* by the Rev'd and learned Mr. *Frankland;* and he, Mr. Finch, hath survived not only almost all the 300 gentlemen that in the space of 30 years were educated in that academy, but moreover hath outliv'd all the academies in the North which succeeded Mr. *Frankland's*. Those luminaries, which have so long supply'd you with light, are at present extinguished; those fountains, which have so long furnished you with refreshment, are now dried up. This would give me great concern, were it not that some worthy gentlemen, who have the interest of religion and good literature at heart, have formed a design of erecting a free academy, upon a much better foundation than any other that has yet been among us. This is to be supported by a moderate annual subscription of all the friends of liberty; and, as it hath hitherto been much approved, I hope it will take effect." This made impressions, and the fruit I hope in due time will appear. If no more at first can be done, I think it would be right to begin with 3 Tutors, rather than delay too long. But great care must be taken, and things well considered and settled at first setting out. Mr. Bourn is well. Pray let me hear from you as soon as you can.

I am your much obliged and sincerely affectionate, &c.

JOHN TAYLOR.

My service to Mr. Bent and all friends at Warrington.

Rev. Joshua Dobson,† of Ainsworth, near Bolton, to Rev. John Seddon.

Bolton, Feb. 4th, 1755.

Dear Sir,—When I first heard of your design to found an accademy at Warrington, I very heartily approved of it, as likely in various respects to be greatly usefull in this and some neighboring counties; and ever since I saw you at Lord Willoughby's, have thought very seriously and frequently about it: but nothing hath offered to my consideration which (as I apprehend) would be a greater advantage to your subscriptions, than the having a good recommendation to Lady Hewley's Trustees, by some gentleman who is known to them, either in person or character. Mr. Daniel Bailey I think the most likely to succeed well, of any person I am acquainted with; but his great modesty, I am apt to think, would desire some other gentlemen to concur with him; and who may be proper, he or you will easily judge. Mr. Orm, of Manchester, is well known to several Dissenters in York, and a letter from him to Mr. Hotham, in Hozier Lane, nephew to minister Hotham, I believe would do good service. I being long since determined to mention your scheme to Mr. Hotham the tradesman, had the last month the opportunity of talking with him about it: he not only seemed to

* "First pupils." This statement requires some modification. Peter Finch entered the academy at Natland, May 3, 1678. The academy opened at Rathmell, March 8, 1669.

† Mr. Dobson was pastor at Ainsworth or Cockey chapel thirty-five years. He died Aug. 29, 1767, aged 75.

think well of it, but when I told him that it was to be hoped 40 or 50 pound per annum might be obtained from York, or perhaps more, he said nothing to discourage your applying. If you have the opportunity of favoring me with a line or two the next post, it will oblige

Your affectionate brother and humble servant,

J. Dobson.

Rev. John Seddon to ————, of Bristol.*

Warrington, 12 April, 1755.

Rev. and dear Sir,—The obliging and friendly manner in which you last year receiv'd the design of an academy in this country, encourages the person who then sollicited it to give you this further trouble upon the same occasion. I was in hopes, when I left Bristol, in a short time to have had an account of a subscription being open'd in our favour, especially as so many gentlemen of leading character and influence seem'd to enter into the design heartily. Several things, I expect to be told, and I doubt not, interven'd to render an application of that sort unseasonable; and it is surely the justest policy in the world to wave an application for a time, rather than by a precipitation to injure the success of a good scheme. We are abundantly willing to admit the propriety of such sentiments while the least probability remains of the convenient season ever arriving.

The success the North-American missionary had at Bristol is very remarkable, and methinks should encourage rather than damp the hopes of adventurers in a similar design, whose claims upon the friends of liberty and good literature have at least an equally good foundation. I should apprehend the gentlemen att Bristol cannot be unacquainted with the political and religious character of the people from whom Mr. Tennant came, and in what manner they are likely to employ the benefactions of their brethren in England,—most certainly not in the support of that liberty that is likely to be of any valueable service to the genuine interests of Christianity. Their treatment of Mr. Mayhew, the almost only publick asserter of rights of private judgment against unscriptural imposition and authority, is but too plain an indication of this. I should likewise imagine that the complexion of Mr. Tennant himself would not altogether escape the observation of some of my Bristol friends. His address is that of a man who knows the world, and the solemnity of his visage not without a proportion of artifice; but if he be in his heart a friend to religious liberty, I'm much mistaken.

Don't imagine, Sir, that I'm repining with envious eye at Mr. Tennant's success; I only flatter myself that the generosity of the friends of liberty will be equally extensive in a case by no means burden'd with so many suspicious circumstances. But it has been hinted to us from several hands that you've form'd a design of erecting an academy upon a similar plan in some place that will be nearer to you. If it be such as will serve the interests of Dissenters att large, and be in any degree the means of reviving a dying cause,—and such I dare say would be the object of your wishes,—we wish it heartily success; and if we cannot go forward with our design in Lancashire, I doubt not but you

* Possibly to Rev. William Richards, the senior minister of Lewin's Mead.

would meet with many of our gentlemen that would heartily concur with you. All that we want is to have some publick provision of this sort upon a truly liberal plann. We are not in the least confined to a particular place. If the Dissenters would but unite and make it a joint concern, so as to serve their common interests, 'tis the utmost of our wishes. Let that be the place that would answer best the purpose in the most extensive and effectual manner. After all, I should not be surpris'd if an attempt of this kind so far West should meet with difficulties. I don't know how far a little partiality, which is natural to us all, may influence my judgement, but indeed I think the climate of Lancashire more likely to be a friendly and propitious seat for the Muses than the finer counties of Somerset and Devon.—As to the state of our scheme here, it has not much advanced since the close of last summer; the coldness of the winter, which is very unfriendly to the growth of tender plants, has been sensibly felt. Lord Willoughby has subscrib'd 10 guineas per ann.; Sir Henry Houghton's family have promis'd to encourage us; so that our present subscription amounts to about £300 per ann. Besides this, we have the prospect of obtaining £40 or £50 per ann. from Lady Hewley's Fund, a handsome subscription from Norwich and several other places. We had a meeting lately of our managers att Manchester, who have agreed that I shall come down to Bristol with Mr. John Lees, who is so well acquainted with several of your principal gentlemen, and is very anxious to have the concurrence and encouragement of his Bristol friends. Mr. Lees is to be att Exeter fair, and I intend meeting him upon his return, which will be the end of May or the beginning of June. And now, dear Sir, you'll favour me with your sentiments in a post or two, and instruct me how to proceed, and what success we are likely to have; you'll oblige me extreamly.—I have wrote you with great freedom, and your friendly and generous spirit, which I had large experience of, encouraged me to it. I hope still to be continu'd amongst the number of your friends, which is a character that will be ever highly pleasing to,

Sir, your most affectionate and obedient, humble servant,

JOHN SEDDON.

Nathaniel Neal, Esq., to Rev. John Seddon.*

Million Bank, London, Sept. 23, 1755.

Rev. Sir,—Your writing to me needs no apology. I only wish it may recompense your own labour; for altho' I heartily love the Dissenting interest, as the cause of Liberty and Religion, yet my hands are so full of business, both of a publick and private nature, that I know not how to embark in any new undertaking; and nothing would be more unfriendly to a tender design as yours is, than to raise an expectation of serving it, which it is out of my power to answer.

Nevertheless, I am extremely willing to impart to you such thoughts

* Nathaniel Neal, the son of the historian of the Puritans, and nephew of Dr. Lardner, was an eminent attorney and Secretary to the Million Bank. He was the author of "A Free and Serious Remonstrance to Protestant Dissenting Ministers, on occasion of the Decay of Religion." He was a friend and correspondent of Dr. Doddridge, and several of his letters are contained in the volume of "Letters to and from Dr. Doddridge," published, in 1790, by Rev. Thomas Stedman.

as arise in my mind concerning the encouragement it may probably meet with in London. The gentlemen of the laity who reside in London, and whose acquaintance and interest might enable 'em to sollicit a subscription of this kind with success, are few, and either too busy or too infirm to set about it with that zeal the cause requires. On the other hand, the ministers will have many reasons for declining it. Difference of judgment in matters of religion, will cause some to discourage the design, and others to apprehend it prudent not to interfere. They will consider this application as burthening their own friends (who are sufficiently burthen'd already), and, if made by them, as increasing their own obligations. It will be said, distance and diversity of sentiment will prevent its furnishing the congregations in or near London with ministers, and that wealth and trade are so much increased in your part of the kingdom, that you are well able to educate ministers for yourselves, without aid from your friends in London. And perhaps some may say it will make it more difficult to set up an academy here, which, tho' not very likely at present, is not universally despair'd of.

For these reasons (which will have different weight with different persons), I incline to be of opinion that yourself, or some other person or persons, both of good temper and good address, must come up to town, if you would hope for any considerable success; and that before you come, you should by letter endeavour to get some of the principal ministers into your interest, at least to prevent their opposing you. Dr. Chandler must at any rate be brought into a neutrality, if he can't be made a friend, though the latter is very desirable. Mr. Touchet will, I doubt not, have a considerable influence over him; so would Dr. Avery and Mr. Marsh, if they would speak to him on the subject; and after he is prepared, a direct address should be made to him from the principal managers of this design, or some of them, respectfully asking his countenance, and apprizing him of what importance you esteem it. Something of the same kind might be fit with respect to Mr. Barker and Mr. Newman. And tho' possibly none of them will directly sollicit in your behalf, it would be carrying a great point to permit you to apply to their friends without any marks of their disapprobation. When you have thus far cleared your way (if you are able to do it), I apprehend the sooner the soliciting subscriptions is begun, the better, for undoubtedly winter is the fittest season.

It might not a little contribute to your success if such ministers in your parts as have an interest with any of the London ministers, especially with those I have named, would write to them in favour of the design, as from themselves. And I think it might be best at present not to say who is designed for Divinity Tutor.

Perhaps you will say, that if so much precaution and preparation is needful in order to an application in London, we are in a very feeble and disjointed condition. But then, you will remember, a man who is ask'd to give ground, must consider how things really are, not how it is desirable they should be.

I have no acquaintance with Mr. Lees whom you name, and only a slight one with Mr. Touchet, and I know that gentleman as well as myself is loaded with business, so that it would be difficult for us to meet, especially as I have a complaint that disables me from walking without inconvenience. From them you will, I hope, receive lights

that may be more useful and encouraging; but be assured those I have aim'd at giving are communicated with a friendly intention.

As my name can give no credit to your measures, I should be as well pleased to have it concealed, as a person consulted on this occasion. I heartily wish you more respectable and powerful patrons. I am myself already engaged in a design of the like nature, and my colleagues might interpret my intermeddling with this, as an indifference to that. However, if by a private occasional correspondence I may be of any service, you may freely command, Rev. Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

NATH. NEAL.

Joseph Rayner, Esq., of Leeds, to Rev. John Seddon.

Leeds, Nov. 8, 1755.

Dear Sir,—In consequence of your request, I have this day had some conversation with the gentlemen you desired, relative to your design'd academy. I don't think you are likely to obtain any great number of subscriptions or benefactions in this town, tho' I own I think their objections, so far as I have yet heard them, of no force, or very little. The approbation they seem to express of the Glasgow education appears to me to be their greatest objection.

However, I believe, in case you bring your design to maturity, you need make no doubt of the usuall allowance from Lady Hewley's Charity as has commonly been given to those boys who have been brought up to the ministry at Glasgow or any private academy in England.

I sincerely wish you success in every valluable undertaking for the publick good, as I really believe that wo'd be; and am, with great sincerity, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

JOS. RAYNER.

Rev. John Seddon to Lord Willoughby of Parham.

Warrington, November 19, 1755.

My Lord,—The indisposition of a bad cold, which denied me the pleasure of paying my duty to your Lordship before you went up to Parliament, now obliges me to give you this trouble. Our Committee at Manchester have come to a resolution to make an application in London this winter in favour of the academy; and to this they are encouraged by the private letters of several of their friends: but, after all the light they have been able to obtain, are still at a loss in what manner to direct their application. The temper of the Dissenters in London, and the disposition of their affairs, as your Lordship much better knows, is very peculiar, and renders it extreamly difficult to address them on any publick affairs: their little parties, imaginary seperate intrests, and prevailing jealousies on all sides, are not easily combined together; and measures that serve to gain any point of importance with one connexion, are the means of breaking with the other. A sense of this has led me to think that a *large* and *general* application, as it is not absolutely necessary, might in the present situation of things be more prudently declin'd; and that an application to the principal gentlemen of fortune who are likely to favour the design, and thro' the influence of a few leading friends amongst the laity, wou'd be attended with fewer difficulties, be less liable to create an opposition,

and upon the whole serve the purposes of the academy equally well. So large a subscription will not, perhaps, be obtained in this as in the other method, if there was a probability of its being successful; but by these means we shall in some measure avoid both the difficulty and danger of solliciting the concurrance of many of the ministers, and at the same time have the prospect of making such an addition to our present subscriptions, as will be sufficient to begin upon; and as to future encouragement, the importance of the thing itself, and the manner of its execution, will, I hope, be its best recommendation. These are only my own private thoughts, in which I shou'd be extreamly glad to be corrected, if wrong. But still, upon this plan, I'm extreamly sensible of one thing, which your Lordship was so obliging to hint to me,—that Dr. Chandler must, if possible, be made a friend of, at least so far our friend as to prevent any unfavourable influence from that quarter. It wou'd, therefore, be of important service to us, if the affair was placed in an agreeable light to him, and by some person that wou'd be likely to have influence with him; and if we know a little better the situation of the Docter's mind, so as to address him in the least exceptionable manner, our Committee wou'd pay him the just compliment, and prepare the way for a personal application to him hereafter. Mr. Peter Touchet is in town, and whether he'll do that service for us or not, I know not. Mr. Samuel Touchet has partly declined doing it, and I a little suspect that there's some shyness between him and the Docter. I fancy I shall come up to town before Mr. Peter Touchet returns, and shou'd be very glad to have the way made as easy as possible. Scarce anything new has occured since your Lordship left us. Mr. Rayner writes me from Leeds, that he has had some conversation with Mr. Leigh, one of the Trustees to Lady Hewley's Fund, and that we may promise ourselves that the same proportion of that Fund will be applied to the intended academy, which has hitherto been granted to the students at Glasgow and the English academies. There is one thing which sometimes gives me a little uneasiness, and I fear may have some ill consequences. Mr. * * * from his low and melancholy state, is become extreamly high-spirited and flighty. He's a good friend to our design, but sometimes speaks of it in a very ungarded manner at improper times and before improper persons. He was at Ulverstone hunt a few weeks since, where he speaks of it to Lord Strange, and I suppose to the other gentlemen. A little before that, he was at Buxton, where he met with Docter Hardin and Mr. Dyson, one of the first officers in the House of Commons, by whom he sent one of our printed Proposals to the Speaker. Whether they wou'd regard him much, I can't tell; but I thought it not improper to mention it to your Lordship.

I am almost asham'd that I've thus trespass'd upon your time and patience. I hope your Lordship's goodness will excuse me, and give me leave to acknowlege myself, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most oblig'd and most obedient servant,

JOHN SEDDON.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Regeneration. By Edmund H. Sears. Printed for the American Unitarian Association. Pp. 248. Boston (U. S.). 1853.

We understand that this little work has met with great acceptance in America; and we learn from the prefatory "Note," that the Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association "earnestly commend it to public attention." It was, indeed, written at their request, and "they publish it because they believe that the clearness and strength with which it states and enforces the great practical doctrines of Christianity, and the beauty and power with which it portrays and recommends the profoundest religious experience, will secure and reward a thorough study." We cannot say that we think the promise of this announcement fully kept; while, at the same time, we would not deny that the book contains many interesting and beautiful thoughts, expressed with force and eloquence. There is, however, rather too constant an *effort* to be eloquent, for our taste; and the language is not free from frequent haziness, leaving the reader in an unpleasant state of perplexity as to the intended meaning. We add an example of this eloquent obscurity, or obscure eloquence, as it is not well to make such a charge without offering some proof of its truth. Describing heaven and earth, the author writes:—

"Or, to insist on a still more literal and scientific exposition of the terms, earth is none other than the atmospheres of heaven arrested and condensed into solid forms. The ethers that expand above us through infinite depths of blue, through which float the amber clouds or stream the glories of a firmament of suns, are simply what remains of those atmospheres that determined into shape and became the earths of a beneficent and ever-working system. Even thus the new heaven of truth that opens upon us, and the celestial ethers that play upon our souls, are arrested and made permanent by being turned into new moralities. Out of the new heavens that God provides, the new earth is formed; and then man is a new creation, a microcosm, in which all spiritual and earthly things are abridged and pictured forth."—P. 235.

Mr. Sears refers to Scripture in support of his account of heaven and earth; but, on looking at the passages, we cannot congratulate him on any great assistance they give either to him or his reader. Indeed, in this instance, as in others, we think Scripture is very strangely used by our author. His interpretations appear to us often arbitrary and fanciful, and based on no sound principle,—as we might expect from one who evidently despises commentators as guides to anything beyond the "letter of the Divine Volume" (pp. 180, 181). The author's tendency to *spiritualize* the meaning of Scripture, leads him, at times, into statements inconsistent with some of its plainest facts; as where he says, that it was because Christ "had no human father," that the Holy Spirit was in him in so pre-eminent a degree. "Christ was not inspired after birth, but the effluence of the Divine nature formed the inmost principle of his natural being, so that his most common words and works had their ground in the ingenerating Divinity" (p. 194). Scripture, we need hardly say, never speaks of the Holy Spirit as being in Christ by virtue of, in consequence of, his miraculous birth, and never, in fact, alludes to that birth in connection with his active ministry as Messiah.

It speaks, rather, of the Spirit as being *given* to him; and probably the Gospels intend to represent it as being imparted to him at the baptism.

We have freely mentioned two or three serious faults, as our critical function binds us to do. The less important peculiarities of expression, which may be classed under the general head of *Americanisms*, we may pass over with a mere intimation of their existence, and their unpleasantness to an English eye and ear. The rest of our task will be more agreeable, leading us to notice the substance and object of the author's main argument.

The object of the work is to set forth man's need of regeneration, his capacity for it, the way by which he attains it, and its nature and results. The whole is discussed under three principal heads—1. The Natural Man; 2. The Spiritual Nature; 3. The New Man.

Mr. Sears begins by stating some extreme doctrines of human nature; for example, that of the Westminster Confession, according to which man is "dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body,"—this being a result not only of actual sin, but also of the sin of our first parents, the guilt of which is imputed and their corrupted nature "conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation." This doctrine is rejected at once, as evidently untrue and absurd. The Pelagian doctrine, that each of us comes into the world pure, and "in the same moral state in which the first man was created," meets with not much better treatment, and is dismissed as only a superficial account of man's natural state. Rejecting these, then, the author next lays down his own doctrine, that the law of human descent includes the transmission of dispositions and "proclivities to evil."

"Putting theories aside, we now come to the stern facts of experience and history. We must take these, not as we would have them, but as we find them. Hereditary sin or transmitted guilt is an idea which cannot be conceived without conflict of thought, or expressed but in terms of self-contradiction.

"But transmissive dispositions, and proclivities to evil, coming down along a line of tainted ancestry, and gathering strength and volume on their way by every generation that transmits them, is a fact that is universal, and so an irreversible law of human descent."—P. 19.

In illustration of this position, Mr. Sears gives us a fearful picture. It appears to us to be overcharged and one-sided; leaving too much out of view the *good*, both in result and in tendency, constantly making its appearance in human life and character, blending with, modifying, and even springing from, qualities and actions in themselves evil, or so called by us. You may, for instance, term the spirit of commerce a mere product of selfishness; but yet what are the blessings which it originates and carries with it! The natural man, too, we are told, does not improve, but retains his old propensities in the midst of art, civilization, refinement of manners. "A desire for his neighbour's lands, was the unappeasable greed of the Anglo-Saxon and his cognate tribes, emerging grimly out of the Cimbric forests, and pouring successive waves of conquest over England. After the lapse of a thousand years, its motions are beating over the Mexican and the Sikh, in a resurgent wave of the same barbarism" (p. 22). Yet it is amidst the same Anglo-Saxon race that the most conspicuous examples of philanthropy have presented themselves, and amongst whom the warmest and most active concern

for the poor and sinful, as well as the most enlightened abhorrence of such things as conquest, war and slavery, now exist. But Mr. Sears does not take such tendencies as these into his account, or, if he does, we suppose he attributes them, not to any natural action of human faculties or native tendencies of ours, but to the controlling power of the Divine Spirit working through man. For, on the latter point, he says, "That man has the power of *originating* truth and goodness, is one of the illusions of his own pride" (p. 74). So far as we can attach a distinct meaning to this part of the work, the author ascribes what is good in man and his works to "the life of God, received within and thence blooming upon the world" (p. 75). If this be so, we fail to perceive how he avoids undermining human responsibility, or charging upon the Divine Spirit the evil results of man's volition and activity. Mr. Sears, indeed, sees that his representation of the "natural man" is open to this objection—viz., "that the tide of corruption that comes from behind us and sweeps us away, destroys our moral responsibility" (p. 64). He does not think that it does so, and holds that the objection will disappear when the spiritual nature and capacities are described in their true light. We can only say, that we do not think he has, in the subsequent part of the book, sufficiently regarded this important objection, or sufficiently removed it out of his way. Much of what is said, again, respecting the descent of evil from parents to children, and remoter descendants, is applicable rather to physical than to moral qualities, and may be admitted as true, without forcing on us the doctrine of hereditary moral evil, at least in so decided and objectionable a form as we have it here. Some positive facts, also, may be urged against this doctrine, so broadly stated. Upright and industrious parents may have a profligate son; and the contrary case, of children being repelled from vice, in disgust at the exhibition of it in parents, has occurred too; whereas, according to this doctrine, we should expect the children only to delight and glory in the evil, from their inherited tendencies.

Yet objecting, as we thus do, to the doctrine before us, we must yet acknowledge the grave and serious character of the question at issue. Few thoughtful persons will be disposed to dogmatize upon it. How much of a man's evil dispositions and conduct may be the result of inherited tendencies, how much shall be attributed to the influence of circumstances and examples around him, tempting him and impelling him, perhaps against his better reason, into sin, who shall tell? Happily, it is not necessary for us to answer this question in order to perceive the reality and importance of that capacity of good which Mr. Sears denominates the spiritual nature, and of the power of rising above evil, whether inherited or not, which this capacity gives us. It is the object of the second part of Mr. Sears' work to describe this spiritual nature; to point out man's intimate connection, through it, with the invisible Being; and the reality of the influence of the Holy Spirit. In both the second and the third parts of the work, we find much with which we fully agree, much that is true and beautiful, expressed in the author's peculiar manner, which we cannot always admire,—and accompanied, too, with the same occasional misappropriation of Scripture, of which we have before spoken. Without attempting to accompany him through the different statements and reasonings of these portions of the work, we will conclude by giving a passage from each;—one to illustrate the

former, and the other the latter part of the remark just made, taking the unfavourable specimen first.

We give the following passage, without being sure that we rightly penetrate the author's meaning, and at any rate not seeing the appropriateness of the illustrations drawn from Scripture, in that sense of his words which we suppose they can alone bear:—

"No diligent and candid reader of the Sacred Scriptures can fail to have discovered that the Spirit-world is described by them under two classes of images. They open above us a region of infinite purity and love, where all that is good and happy is parted off by itself, and hangs above us like a firmament of grandeur and beauty. They open beneath us a region where sin in its hideous shape sinks away to its own level, and seeks the hiding-places of a starless night. These two states are set over one against the other. It is the parallelism which runs through the whole Bible, and you scarcely open a page where you do not trace its lines distinctly and sharply drawn. No middle region is described in the land of souls. And this world of sense and matter is spoken of as hanging midway between those two great kingdoms of Light and of Shadow. The world we now live in, mixed up as it is of good and evil, is constantly yielding back its primal elements, decomposing and parting off, on the one hand, the worthless dross, and, on the other, the clear and imperishable gold. Good and evil dissolve and part off by themselves, the good rising by its own affinities and seeking its kindred heaven, thus pouring ever fresh streams of life and blessedness into its abodes. The bad parts away, and is drawn to its like in the abysses, because there too is its kindred and its home.

"This doctrine we find drawn out in the parable of the tares and the wheat growing together until the harvest, when the former are gathered into bundles and piled up for burning, and the latter is stored away in its garners. We find it touched off with a most graphic pencil in the parable of the sheep and the goats, where the Son of Man sits among the assembled nations, and, as the solemn drama passes along, they part asunder under the opposite sentences, Come, ye blessed! and, Depart, ye cursed! We find it, again, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, symbolized in the great gulf that lies between the realm of Light and Bliss, and the realm of Shadow and Pain. And again we find it in the Apocalypse, where the new heaven shines above, beautiful as a bride, and the lake of fire lies beneath, with all unclean things that float on its noxious waves. And yet, again, we find it in our Saviour's description of a two-fold resurrection; of those who have done good coming out of their graves to higher life and fruition, and of those that have done evil to a resurrection of condemnation and shame."—Pp. 136—138.

We have purposely given prominence, in the foregoing remarks, to the subject of the misapplication of Scripture, as suggested by the volume before us, because we think it much to be regretted that any writer, in the interest of Religion itself, should thus mystify and pervert the simple and beautiful language of the sacred volume. No good result can arise from such a course. You may make the Bible, on this principle, mean anything you choose; and may as well go back at once to the allegories of Philo and Origen, or the ingenious figments of the Cabbalists.

Our last quotation we can give without any such protest, and there are many like it in the volume:—

"The Christian believes that after the event of death he shall be transferred to a sphere of spiritual being, and be surrounded by the denizens of another world. But what if we are already in it! What if already we are environed by its 'numberless and rapid travellers'! This veil of flesh that hangs about

us is designed not more to reveal God to us, than to attemper and soften to us his intenser brightness,—to hide the stupendous agencies by which he sways us, and to muffle the noise of their footsteps, because our ears could not bear the too solemn sounds, nor our eyes gaze on the too beautiful sight!

"Man, in the great plan of Providence, is not *transferred* from one sphere of being into another. Rather is he brought into conscious relations to a higher and yet higher sphere, by the successive development of his original powers. The infant, first introduced into this world of sense, scarcely sees its varied forms of art and nature. All is a blank, or all is confusion; but he has within him a faculty which gradually unfolds and comes into exercise, and then what new and endless prospects open around him! The man blind from his birth has seemed to himself to live only in a very narrow sphere, through which he groped painfully, breathing the fragrance of fields and bathing in the warm sunlight, yet seeing not the objects whence they come. Some skilful hand touches the undeveloped faculty and removes its obstructions, and lo! without any transfer, he lives in a new world, that floods his soul with grandeur and beauty. He has not been carried into it, for it lay all about him before, and poured its influence upon him; but now for the first time his developed powers have brought him into open relations with it. Nor can we say how far this might still go on. Not one half of the glory and excellency even of this visible sphere has ever yet revealed itself to our dull senses, and agencies too refined and subtle for our detection are every moment playing around us and through us. Were our perceptions sufficiently quickened, or new perceptions given us, what a new world of wonders would open upon us, even where now we stand, transcending all our imaginations and dreams!

"Even so the spiritual world is not a realm far off in space, into which we shall be introduced by the event of death. Rather is it that order of being of which we are to have cognizance by the powers that already wait within us, and death will not so much remove *us*, as remove *from* us the obstructions that closed us in from its unseen illuminations."—Pp. 81, 82.

The Religious Spirit that befits this Crisis, not the Spirit of Humiliation; War with Russia being the Nation's highest Sacrifice to God and Duty; else to be abstained from as Iniquity. A Sermon, preached in Renshaw-Street Chapel, Liverpool, April 23, 1854, *on the Sunday before the Day appointed for National Humiliation.* By John Hamilton Thom. 12mo. Pp. 24. J. Chapman, Strand.

This is a noble discourse, teeming with moral truths and Christian principles, enunciated with an eloquence as beautiful as it is rare. Mr. Thom, while boldly defending the consistency of War, under certain circumstances, with Christian duty, so precisely and clearly defines what those circumstances are, and makes right and truth and the happiness of the human race the test of the justifiableness of war, that it is, we think, scarcely possible to pervert his concessions to the support of an unrighteous war. While defending the war into which the Western powers have been reluctantly drawn, in the defence of principles and rights more important than the preservation of peace itself, Mr. Thom reprobates the insincerity or superstition, or both, which gave birth to the recent Day of *Humiliation*. Never was professed humiliation more misplaced than upon an occasion when, according even to the prayers prepared by the ecclesiastical authorities of our land, we are embarking in a war, not to aggrandize ourselves, but to defend the weak against the aggressions of the strong.

We believe that a War sermon like this of Mr. Thom's is better cal-

culated to promote and secure European peace, than all the homilies in behalf of non-resistance put forth by the Peace Society.

Mr. D'Israeli, with that *amiable candour* which characterizes most of his speeches, lately professed his utter ignorance of the reasons of England being involved in a war. Let Mr. Thom inform the Conservative leader of the facts of the case.

"There are in Jerusalem what are called the 'Holy Places,'—places associated with the great scenes in the Life and Death of our Saviour, and concentrated for the most part around Calvary. Of these places, of course the Moslem Ruler is the Master; but he has conceded every privilege that their own folly renders safe to the two great Christian Hierarchies that feed their souls on Relics. Here the two Churches of the West and of the East, the Latin and the Greek, play their low game of sacerdotal competition—here they outbid and outrival one another—here they contend for the prior possession of Altars on specially sacred spots—here they get up lying Miracles to support their claims—here they bring together Immorality and Superstition, and cover the one with the other; and here, where the Holy One lived and died, in this grovelling and foul light they present Christianity to the Moslem, who, with unutterable scorn and a strong arm, indulges their fanaticism and represses their outrageous disorder.—Recently, at the instigation of the Emperor of the French, the Sultan extended the privileges in the Holy Places of the Latin Church. What was the character of this extension? It is worthy of being noted; for in these transactions every thing Christian belongs to the Sultan, and every thing Anti-Christian to the wretched superstitions that traffic in Christ's name. It was this,—'A Decree that for the future all Christian Confessions should enjoy *the same Privileges* in respect of the Holy Places.' For this, for the crime of tolerance, for a liberality that would adorn a Christian, for preserving a strict impartiality between two juggling factions, a Moslem Emperor is by a Christian Power insulted, plundered, invaded, menaced with destruction; and but for this War, the Righteousness of which is now in question, doubtless his place must soon have known him no more.—Russia complains of the equal privileges granted to the Roman Church within the dominions of the Sultan; Turkey explains that she desires nothing but to hold the balance even, gives to Russia a fresh privilege, in permission to build a new Church in Jerusalem, and engages for the future, 'that no change shall be made in regard to the Holy Places without the joint concurrence of Russia and of France.' So far as the Holy Places are concerned, it was impossible for Russia to ask for more; but she uses the opportunity. Under the mask of these trifles she pursues her real objects. Her objects are invasion and absorption; her plea is Religion. She demands a Protectorate over all Greek Christians within the territories of Turkey, to be recognised by a treaty. For the Sultan to have conceded this, would have been a virtual abdication: it would have been, first, to share his sovereignty within his own dominions; and, secondly, to put an instrument, a legal instrument, for his own destruction into the hands of his oppressor, who would have interpreted the treaty according to his pleasure, enforced the interpretation by his might, and thus have advanced to his ends under the cover of a double hypocrisy—in the name of Religion, and of the Faith of Nations. Under this pretext, he took possession of provinces tributary to Turkey; under this pretext—but that France and England have declared that such things shall not be—Turkey, like Poland, would have disappeared from the map of Europe, and Barbarian Power made a mighty step towards universal dominion.—I do not feel that I am going beyond my province in recalling these things to your remembrance; for the lofty sentiment of high Duty and Trust in God, which alone may be adequate to sustain the burdens of this War, depends upon our conviction of its Righteousness, and its Righteousness depends upon the facts of its history."—Pp. 8—10.

The only drawback from the enjoyment which we have experienced while reading this sermon, proceeds from the recollection that its gifted author has announced his purpose to retire within a few weeks from the pulpit which he has filled with so much ability for nearly a quarter of a century. We should at any time grudge even the *temporary* inaction of pulpit powers, in all the vigour of their maturity, such as Mr. Thom possesses. In the present unsupplied state of our pulpits, his withdrawment even for a season is matter of regret to a much wider circle than the intelligent congregation at Renshaw Street. However fixed his purpose may be to discontinue his labours at Liverpool, we venture to express, on public as well as personal grounds, an earnest hope that his ministry sets there only to rise, after no long interval, with meridian brightness, in another horizon.

A Sermon on occasion of the Death of the Rev. John Gooch Robberds, preached at Cross-Street Chapel, April 30th, 1854; *with the Services at the Interment, April 26th,* 1854. By William Gaskell, M.A.

Though "prepared in sickness, as well as in sorrow," this tribute to the memory of his friend and colleague will well sustain Mr. Gaskell's reputation as an elegant writer and a very impressive preacher. On both the Address at the Interment and the Sermon, there is the impress of striking sincerity and deep sympathy with his subject. If some of our pages were not already occupied and adorned by a tribute from another pen to the memory of Mr. Robberds, we should be tempted to quote several passages, in which Mr. Gaskell felicitously describes the intellectual and social characteristics of the able and good man with whom for more than a quarter of a century he has been united in the pastoral office. The short extracts which follow describe him most truly in his religious character:

"His piety was of a remarkably bright and cheerful kind. So much was this the case, that those who had not the opportunity of becoming thoroughly acquainted with his deep reverence and love for sacred things, might sometimes perhaps be led, by the playfulness of his remarks, into a little misapprehension of his real spirit. Religion with him was not something to cover the earth with a cloud, but was 'the light of life,' touching it with hues of beauty, and sending gleams of sunshine into the depths of its darkest shadows. He never regarded it as in any way 'designed to make our pleasures less,' but as intended to purify and refine and hallow them, and open up to us more delightful views of God's works and ways continually. He never looked upon it as that which was to hang like a burden on the soul, wearying and oppressing it, but as a strong supporting and uplifting power, which amidst the inevitable pains and sufferings and uncertainties of life, would bear it serenely, trustingly and hopefully on."—P. 4.

"He might perhaps have been not inaptly called an Evangelical Unitarian. Looking to Christ with open mind and open heart, as 'the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world,' he desired with all his soul to learn what he taught, and that he faithfully preached. In so doing he dwelt very much more on the positive side of his teachings than on the negative and controversial. In the mere polemics of theology, he had no pleasure whatever. They suited not the least his dispositions and tastes. He loved entirely to get out of the narrow, rigid, ice-bound circle of creeds, and be left at liberty to range the broad open sea of opinion, and welcome the sunny beams of truth from whatever quarter they might shine. He prized Christianity so much, that he delighted to recognize good in all its various forms."—P. 13.

OBITUARY.

March 16, at Shepton Mallet, the Rev. J. B. Bristowe, aged 80 years. He was born at Stourbridge, in Worcestershire, and had the advantage of being brought up under the ministry of the Rev. Benjamin Carpenter. In early youth he manifested a strong desire for the service of the Christian ministry, and was educated with a view to the discharge of its sacred duties in the College at Manchester. Having completed his course of study, he became pastor of the Presbyterian congregation at Mansfield. He was afterwards settled at Hinckley, in Leicestershire. And, with a view to health, he removed to Ringwood, where he resided for twenty-three years, and was much respected. Consumptive tendencies rendering a change of residence desirable, he was recommended by his medical friends to try the mild climate of Devonshire; and the society at Sidmouth being without a minister, he supplied the pulpit there for a short time, and then took charge of the congregation at Topsham, in the same county. In 1848, he was invited to Shepton Mallet, where he continued, in the active discharge of his pastoral duties, until he was removed, after a short illness, by death, sincerely mourned by his own family, and much regarded by his people. Though so far advanced in life, he preached with great energy, and gave himself to the work of the flourishing Sunday-schools connected with the chapel to the last; and those to whom he ministered gratefully testify that he did whatever he could, and even more than he ought to have attempted at his age, for their moral and spiritual welfare.

To few ministers is granted the privilege of being so long employed in the Master's service. Mr. Bristowe was actively engaged in the work to which his life was devoted for nearly *sixty* years. And what an eventful period in which to live and labour! Though he had reached the term allotted by the Psalmist to this probationary life,—the fourscore years which, when attained, are to most persons accompanied by physical infirmities,—he preserved much of the vigour and elasticity of a younger man, and kept up his interest in all that bore upon the progress and improvement of the world. When he found his end approaching, he still cheerfully occupied himself with whatever his hand found to do, and then meekly bowed his head to the will of Heaven, and calmly awaited his change. He retained all his faculties to the latest moment of his existence. His greatest delight was in hearing the hymns and portions of scripture which were read to him, and in uniting in prayer to the Father, in the name of his sent Son.

Mr. Bristowe was an Unitarian of the school of Dr. Priestley. The faith which he had preached for more than half a century, and the doctrines which he had professed, he found an adequate source of comfort and peace in the near approach of eternity. He was often in the habit of repeating the words of Paul, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." This, he said, was the good apostle's confession, and he wanted no more for his own consolation and assurance. In this faith he lived from youth to age. In it he serenely departed, when he heard the voice from the spirit-land summoning him away. And *now*, we will hope, he is gone to be with the Saviour, to be like him, and to see him as he is in the many-mansioned house of the Father.

March 17, at Lympstone, Devonshire, Miss Jane B. Stoodon, in the 91st year of her age. During the greater part of a century, she had been united to the Presbyterian Dissenters assembling for worship at Gulliford chapel, in the parish of Woodbury. Her understanding was of a high order, and upon every subject which came under her observation, she was able to take a comprehensive view, and express herself with clearness and precision. On religion, she was able at all times to give to every one a reason of the hope that was within her. Her views were decidedly Unitarian, and on that firm rock of faith she rested until death. She met death without trouble or fear. A paralytic stroke had partially deprived her of the use of her limbs, yet there was no murmuring, no complaining: by her actions, she seemed to greet the last enemy with, "Welcome, sweet messenger of immortality!"

Her mortal remains were interred in the family burying-ground at Gulliford

chapel, on Saturday, the 25th of March, attended by a large assemblage of friends. On the Sunday morning following, her funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. L. D. Jones, minister of Gulliford and Topsham. There was a large congregation present, and the sermon, which was suitable and impressive, was listened to with the greatest attention.

April 13, in London, where he was pursuing his preparatory studies in University College, Mr. Charles Wood, a divinity student of Manchester New College. Cut off at the early age of twenty-three, he has left on the minds of all who had intercourse with him, whether as fellow-students or as instructors, a pleasing remembrance of great simplicity and ingenuousness of character, and a deep regret that the promise of so much usefulness should have been prematurely blighted. Although born in an humble rank of life, and destitute in his early years of the opportunities of high mental culture, he had imbibed from his estimable parents, a strength of religious conviction and moral principle, which more than compensated for the want of some external advantages. When at length fresh means of improvement were opened to him at college, he cultivated them with a closeness of application, which, it is to be feared, proved too much for the natural weakness of his constitution, and probably laid the foundation of the illness which finally terminated his life. He was fitted for the sacred vocation to which he had devoted himself, by a religious fervour and tenderness of spirit which was very conspicuous in his devotional compositions, and by a conscientious sense of duty and love of truth, of which he gave strong and decisive proof on more than one occasion during his short span of twenty-three years. Like most persons of this temperament, he was keenly alive to the beautiful in nature, and had a great taste for poetry and music. During his first session at college, he took great interest in the Course on the English Language and Literature by the Rev. W. Gaskell, towards whom on this account, only a few days before his death, he expressed to the writer a deep sense of obligation. If his life had been spared, and he had retained sufficient strength to complete the studies which he had so well begun, he would have been admirably fitted to carry the influences of a pure and enlightened Christianity into the class from which he had himself sprung, and to cultivate among them the genuine refinement and elevation of mind which are not the exclusive attribute of any particular social grade, but, wherever there is mental culture and a religious spirit, are just as accessible to the home of the mechanic as to that of the peer. This is the work which Christianity has to accomplish in myriads whom its living spirit has yet scarcely touched. May men capable of teaching and illustrating this great truth, rise up in greater abundance among us, to supply the places of those who have been taken away!

April 14, at Hackney, a few days after giving birth to a daughter, Anne, wife of Mr. Charles Green, in the 35th year of her age.

Favoured by nature with powers of no common quality, she had taken great pains in their cultivation, and possessed on most subjects an amount and exactness of information which belong to few. With much warmth of heart were associated unusual clearness and elasticity of mind. Thoroughness was a marked feature in her character: whatever she undertook, she had no idea of only half-doing. Feeble health in vain strove with her natural energy: prostrated she might be more than once, but, with an object in view, the indomitable will was almost sure at last to conquer. With this firmness of purpose was united great sweetness of disposition. Nobody more easily moved by kindness; none more immovable by anything approaching to harshness. Extreme sensitiveness and delicacy of feeling in no way interfered with a naturally free and unconstrained manner that won upon all with whom she came in contact. A voice of exquisite sweetness gave a charm to a natural, graceful elocution, which rendered her reading a never-failing attraction. She entered into the spirit of her author with all her heart and soul, and inspired others with the same feeling. There are few who occupy the pulpit who might not have profited from her reading of the Scriptures. Unaffectedly devout, and never permitting a day to witness the neglect of devotional duties, she shrunk with unmixed aversion from whatever seemed like a parade of piety. Frugal and self-denying in the supply of her own wants, she rejoiced when she was able to bestow with liberal hand on others: so much greater, she would

remark, the pleasure of giving than of spending on oneself! Her heartiest hospitality was ever ready for any who could bring with them the recommendation of intelligence and moral worth. Inconvenience or trouble was never permitted to weigh when kindness to another could be shewn. In whatever domestic duty engaged, always comely, with the air and manners of a gentlewoman. The light and life of her own home, she carried innocent gaiety with her wherever she went. Much suffering could not subdue the buoyancy of her spirit, and was rarely permitted to cloud the bright sunshine of her habitual cheerfulness. To her, this world was a good and glorious world, containing so much to excite love and admiration and gratitude. From the homage of *fear*, either to God or man, her entire nature recoiled: to her it seemed a sort of impiety to associate feelings of dread with the thought of Him whose beneficence shines out so radiantly in his works. A loving, trusting, cheerful, grateful heart she could give, and she gave it with all her heart.

The always delicate and too often thankless position of a Mother-in-law, to her presented few difficulties. She soon inspired a warmth of affection that no natural tie could have made stronger, and has left behind feelings and recollections that will minister good to children, and it may be children's children, when her own name shall have faded from remembrance. The *end* of the influence, for good or for evil, in this world or the next, of any human being, who can tell?

As far as any church had exercised influence in the formation of her character, the credit must be given to the Church of England, to which she never ceased to feel attachment, although conscious of late of a growing divergence between the views she really entertained and those taught in its creeds.*

This consciousness lessened the interest she had been accustomed, from early years, to take in its services. "When I go to church," she would say, "I want to be reminded of my duty, and supplied with motives for discharging the duty well. Instead of which, I hear of nothing but the necessity and virtue of believing." And then she would, perhaps, illustrate her impression of the little worth of such preaching by a reference to some domestic she might be, or had been, troubled with,—one most exemplary in church or chapel attendance, who would yet slur over or altogether neglect the plainest duty, if she thought it would only escape the keen eye of her mistress! "How much better," would be her sensible remark, "if in church schools and chapel schools, instead of cramming the poor with catechism, they were taught to make it matter of conscience to perform the humblest duties well, and inspired with so much of self-respect, that they should be *too proud* ever knowingly to expose themselves to deserved censure!" Her own conception of what sermons ought to be she found realized in those of the Rev. J. J. Tayler, published a year or two since,* which she read and re-read with increasing satisfaction, and a growing sense of their excellence and beauty.

A life of purity and great usefulness, adorned with many natural graces, and with tastes and acquirements that would have dignified any station, terminated just when life presented its strongest attraction. It was surrendered with calm composure and unmurmuring submission. Amid physical suffering that would have tried the nerve of the strongest man, there was heard only the expression of thankfulness for the "many mercies" she enjoyed in the

* No observant person can have intercourse with members of the Church of England without detecting the strange incongruity that so frequently exists between the professed and the real creed. Thousands are born and baptized into that Church, become attached to its forms and services, are earnest in its support, and regarded as exemplary members of its communion, who yet have no more sympathy with its actual dogmas than they have with the latest form of fanaticism that excites their contempt. An outward show of orthodoxy only serves as a covering for the rankest inward heterodoxy. A man's whole life—all that really constitutes life—thought, feeling, act—shall be in direct antagonism to his professed creed, and he know it not! The friend who, with serious face, joins in damning you on Sunday, will on Monday invite you to his hospitable table, crack his jokes and enjoy yours with hearty relish, in utter unconsciousness of the "great gulf" which, only the day before, he declared his belief must presently divide you! *Belief*, so called—what, with a very large portion of those who profess to have any, is it? Unmeaning words on the lips, belying every natural, healthy emotion of their hearts!

* "Christian Aspects of Faith and Duty." 1851.

kind attentions of attached and sympathizing friends. When pressing, almost for the last time, her child to her bosom, "Hard to quit the world just now!" softly and sweetly said, was the only plaint a Mother's soul permitted to escape her. Unwavering trust in the wisdom and benevolence that would rule in the next world, as in this, prevented any passing cloud from casting its shadow over the beautiful serenity of her last conscious hours. Self was swallowed up in affectionate thought for those who would be left behind. In calm, quiet talk with her husband—"I need not ask you to love the babe," she said; "for my sake, as well as its own, I know you will. Only be mindful not to spoil it through much fondness. Do not imagine, because it is your child, it will not have faults: be sure that it will; and do you watch for and correct them. Above all, teach it to be truthful in everything, and to look up to God as a kind Father, and not as a stern Avenger." Truthfulness and trustfulness,—these formed the chief elements of her moral nature, and, in life and the prospect of death, much beauty of character they produced in the Mother. Can a better wish be breathed for it, than that these same elements may be as strongly developed, and as efficacious for good, in the character of her Child!

April 15, at his residence in Bloomsbury Square, Arthur Aikin, Esq., F.L.S., F.G.S., in his 81st year. Mr. Aikin was the eldest son of Dr. John Aikin, who practised for many years as a physician in Yarmouth, and afterwards in the metropolis. He and his sister, Mrs. Barbauld, were the only children of the Rev. Dr. John Aikin, who presided for many years, with universal esteem and respect, over the Academy at Warrington, an institution justly celebrated for the eminent men who in succession acted as tutors, and for the many students of ability and worth whom it sent out into the world. Dr. Aikin, the son, was a most valuable contributor to the store of educational works which have helped materially to inform the mind and cultivate the taste of the present and now passing generation.

Mrs. Barbauld's name will live as one of the first writers of the day, both in prose and verse; and she possessed that undoubted characteristic of true genius, the power of suggesting thoughts and feelings which were in advance of those of her own time. The "Hymns in Prose" for children would alone stamp her as a genuine poet.

The subject of this notice was born at Warrington, May 19, 1773; and in the intellectual family to which he belonged, his naturally excellent abilities found their best and happiest development. His mind was truly a storehouse of knowledge on almost every subject, each well arranged and in due and fitting proportion. His chosen profession on entering life was the same as that of his excellent grandfather, the Dissenting ministry; and he accepted early in life an invitation to become pastor of the Presbyterian congregation at Shrewsbury. Here he continued about two years, securing the general esteem and attachment of his congregation, and forming many valuable friendships. At length, he quitted Shrewsbury, left the ministry, and removed to London, where he devoted his attention chiefly to subjects of science. For twenty-two years he filled, with great credit and distinction, the office of Secretary to the Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. He was Lecturer on Chemistry at Guy's Hospital thirty-two years, and continued his favourite labours in this field until the two last years of his life. He was also a distinguished member of the Geological Society, of which he was one of the founders. He was likewise a Fellow of the Linnæan Society, and first President of the Chemical Society. And it may be noticed, that amongst the numerous inventions and discoveries by which physical science has so extensively benefited the world during the last half century, a great number originated with Mr. Aikin. The powers of his clear and vigorous intellect continued unabated to the end, when, having finished the appointed task of life, he tranquilly, and apparently without pain, fell asleep. He survived his three younger brothers, but has left an only sister, Miss Lucy Aikin, a lady well known in the literary world as the author of many valuable works, among others, "Memoirs of the Court of Queen Elizabeth" and of "King James I."

Mr. Aikin's superior powers and cultivation of mind, however, undoubted as they were, held a very inferior rank in value to that of his character as a man. His overflowing benevolence of heart and complete freedom from selfishness, led him to take a warm interest in the welfare of every human

being; and nothing gratified him more than to alleviate the sorrow or increase the happiness of all who came within the sphere of his influence. He died unmarried; but though the parental ties were wanting, there were wanting neither the affections they naturally tend to produce, nor objects on which to exert their influence. In the children of his brothers, to the third generation, he found his own; and the love he bestowed on them was repaid by their devoted and grateful affection, and his loss is mourned by them as that of a second father.

A few words remain to be said on the subject of religion. It has been mentioned that Mr. Aikin quitted the ministry at an early period of his life; this step was occasioned by doubts he had been led to form respecting the truth of revealed religion. These doubts, however, were, not many years afterwards, completely dispelled on fuller inquiry, as the writer of this notice is able to testify; and he remained to the end of his life a sincere believer in the truth of the Christian revelation, according to the simple views of the Unitarian belief, which appeared to him to be most in consonance with the doctrines and teaching of our honoured Lord. In corroboration of this statement, it may be mentioned that, during the latter years of his life, it had been one of his favourite occupations to arrange, examine and collate for his own use, the different books of the New Testament, particularly the four Evangelists and the writings of St. Paul; and there will doubtless be found amongst his papers valuable MSS. on this subject. He seldom spoke of religion; and it is probable that with a very few intimate friends alone, who shared his sympathies on this point, did he ever converse on the subject. But it was with him a deeply-felt and influential principle, forming his rule of life and his support in death, beyond which he anticipated a joyful union with the wise and good of all ages and of all climes, in those regions whence all evil, natural and moral, shall be banished, and where the spirit of truth and love shall bear universal sway.

S. L.

[We have been favoured with the following graphic touches by another friend, so just to Mr. Aikin's rare and distinguishing moral graces and social characteristics, that in any attempt to stamp the image of his worth as a brother, relative and friend, the omission of them would seem to be unpardonable. They formed a part of some biographical notes put into the hands of the President of the Linnæan Society by one best qualified to speak. They are a beautiful outline, drawn by a master hand, of some of those better qualities of our common humanity which, far more than intellectual accomplishment or the results of speculative inquiry, elevate the world and life in our esteem, and feed the springs of gratitude and hope.]

With the relinquishment of his profession at Shrewsbury, Mr. Aikin did not give up his connection with that part of the country. He made several tours in North Wales, of one of which he published an interesting and instructive account, and he was the first to investigate and describe the geology of Shropshire. Henceforth his home was in London, and for many years in the house of his beloved brother, the late Mr. Charles Aikin, in conjunction with whom he published, in 1797, the Chemical Dictionary. In this work the separate articles are not assigned to their respective authors, so intimate was the concert between the brothers, so equally shared the labour and the ability! Through a long career he preserved without the smallest deviation "the even tenor of his way." A total absence of ambition,—a natural shyness which shrunk from all display,—a taciturnity often painful and mortifying to his friends,—withheld him from ever taking in mixed society, or in general estimation, the place to which his eminent abilities, his scientific skill, and the extraordinary variety, extent and accuracy of his knowledge, justly entitled him; on the other hand, he never engaged in a controversy and never made an enemy. His wants were few; his manners simple, kind and courteous; his affections tender and constant; his temper was imperturbable; his charity unfailing; his disinterestedness exemplary; his morals spotless.

April 28, at his house in Gower Street, Nathaniel Wallich, Esq., M.D., a very eminent botanist and horticulturalist. Dr. Wallich was by birth a Dane. He served in early life in the Danish settlement of Serampore, in India, until that place fell into the power of England. Like many other Danish officers, he was permitted to enter into the En-

glish service, and rose to occupy the first botanical post in India, being for thirty years Curator of the Botanical Gardens at Calcutta.

After the death of Dr. Roxburgh, the management of the Garden at Calcutta was entrusted to Dr. Wallich, whose talents and activity, under the auspices of the Company, raised the establishment to a high degree of prosperity. More than three hundred persons are employed in the Garden, so that the naturalization of useful objects, and preservation for study of the rare productions of the different parts of India, are equally attended to. Many assistants traverse the country at the expense of the Company, and with unwearied zeal continue to enrich the garden and the herbarium. Dr. Wallich himself travelled in 1820 throughout Nepaul, which, situated at the foot of the great mountains of Himalaya, presents a vegetation of a very different nature from that of Bengal. Notwithstanding the severe disorders brought on by fatigue and the climate, he afterwards visited Penang, Singapore, the kingdom of Ava, and several other parts of India; in addition, he sent collectors into various districts into which he could not go in person; so that by these different means a very considerable number of vegetables has been amassed. Descriptions of several of these have been given in the Prodromus Floræ Nepalensis of Don. Wallich himself inserted many of his discoveries in the Flora Indica, by Dr. Carey, and commenced two other works for the purpose of making them better known; one, the *Tentamen Floræ Nepalenses illustratæ*, presenting a detailed description and lithographic figure of the principal plants of that country; the other, much more splendid, designed to present the history and coloured figures of the rarer plants of Asia, *Plantæ Asiaticæ Rariores*.

In the Museum of the East-India Company, there is an immense collection of dried plants, specimens of Indian vegetation. When Dr. Wallich settled in London on his retirement from the office which he had held at Calcutta, the East-India Company, with a liberality which gives them an honourable claim to the gratitude of the men of science of every country, gave Dr. Wallich instructions to distribute these precious collections among the principal botanists of the day; and Dr. Wallich acted upon these instructions in a manner conformable to their nature and his own generous spirit. Far from profiting by his situation to reserve for himself the publication of so much riches, he laboured to distribute them in the manner most useful for the progress of Natural History. He was delightful as a companion. His conversation was particularly animated—a stream flowing from an ardent mind and a warm heart. His time and his notes, from the first moment of his settlement in London, were wholly at the service of his scientific and other friends. From that time also he was, as far as the state of his health permitted, a constant and grateful worshiper at the chapel in Little Portland Street. He may be numbered with the eminent philosophers and naturalists who, like the late Sir James Smith, united the love of Nature with the love of God, and who rejoiced to think that He who arrays the lily of the fields in splendour, by the gospel of his Son "invites us, his rational creatures, to confide in his promises of eternal life." Dr. Wallich has left a widow and family to mourn their loss.

Hampstead. E. T.

April 24, at Mohawk, near Brantford, Canada West, aged 13 months, MABEL, eldest child of Francis WANSEY, late of Arborfield, Berks.

INTELLIGENCE.

MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE AND THE AINSWORTH SCHOLARSHIPS.

The removal of the College to London has raised some doubts about the continuance of the Scholarships offered to be provided by Mr. Ainsworth. The Committee, under the circumstances, thought it right to refer the subject to Mr. Ainsworth's consideration, feeling prepared to abide with perfect satisfaction in his decision. The result our readers will be glad to learn from the following document, just transmitted by Mr. Ainsworth to the Committee:

"Being desirous that the young laymen of the Unitarian body, seeking a higher

education in connection with University College, should be alumni of Manchester New College, London, with the twofold object of promoting a close fellowship and intercourse between the lay and clerical students of that body, and for securing for the lay students the advantages of the theological and philosophical instructions which Manchester New College may provide for that class of students, I propose to continue the Scholarship of £100 to the Gold Medallist, at the examination for the Master's Degree, in the University of London, in either of the branches of Classics, Science or Philosophy, under the following conditions:

"1. That Manchester New College, London, shall not restrict itself to clerical students, nor simply open its classes to *lay* students, but shall use all the influence it can exert, and avail itself of whatever means may be placed within its power, to induce young men of the Unitarian denomination, seeking a University education in London, formally to enrol themselves as students of Manchester New College.

"2. That no lay student shall be qualified to be a competitor for this Scholarship, who has not been enrolled as a student of Manchester New College, gone through his undergraduate course under the direction of the Principal of that College, and attended the classes for religious and ethical instruction which it provides for its lay students.

"3. That Manchester New College shall annually advertise this Scholarship, as an inducement to lay students to enrol themselves of Manchester New College, with any other means of a like kind that may accrue to it, and which might act as inducements to that effect.

"4. That such Scholarship shall continue during my life or pleasure.

THOMAS AINSWORTH.

"*The Flosh, May* 20, 1854."

Mr. Ainsworth's proposal is a very noble one, and calls for the gratitude of the friends of both the College and University Hall, as it offers a strong inducement to the laymen who are members of the latter institution, also to connect themselves with the College, and to enlarge the boundaries of their studies by including those peculiar to the College. We need scarcely add, that the College Committee have promptly accepted and acknowledged by a suitable vote the continuance and extension of Mr. Ainsworth's munificent bounty.

While on this subject, we would call attention to the first Examination, in London, of the College, which is to take place during this month; the particulars are stated in an advertisement. We hope and expect to see at both the Examination and the Dinner an unusually large and important gathering of the Trustees and friends of the College.

BOLTON DISTRICT UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

The usual spring meeting was held at Park Lane, near Wigan, on the 27th of April. Rev. Marmaduke Frankland conducted the devotional services. A clear and excellent sermon on the diffusion of truth was preached by Rev. John Wright, who insisted, 1st, that in matters of religious belief every individual was bound to attend to the training of his own mind and the formation of his own opinions; and 2nd, that every individual was next bound to proclaim the truth and propagate his belief. This gave the preacher an opportunity of urging upon Unitarians the dissemination of their doctrinal as well as practical and social views. He condemned all attempts to draw a line between the essentials and non-essentials of religion, as fatal to the progress of truth, and concluded by urging upon all free and unflinching action.

Tea was provided in the school-room adjoining the chapel, which was tastefully decorated with evergreens and flowers. A numerous company assembled there from Wigan, Hindley, Chowbent, Walmsley and Bolton. As soon as the repast was concluded, the chair was taken by the respected minister of the place. In consequence of the presence of Rev. Mr. Forster, of Kentish Town, he took occasion to allude to the circumstance, and wish success to his efforts and labours in the great cause in which he had embarked. Mr. Forster described, in an interesting manner, the circumstances of his present position, sketching the history of his change of opinions, and adverting to various movements in the religious world indicative of a nearer approach to the Unitarian system. From these known facts, he encouraged Unitarians to persevere in giving prominence to their opinions, and assured them that, if converts did not openly join their ranks, they adopted their views, and were breaking ground for them in all directions.

Rev. J. Wright followed up the subject which he had brought forward in the pulpit, by additional remarks, all

calculated to shew the importance of taking broad and definite views of doctrine.

Rev. M. Frankland considered that the Unitarians had a responsible work before them. They were the pioneers of the religious world. Their position as a denomination was greatly improved, and it was their own fault if they did not give greater currency to their opinions amongst those who were so favourably disposed towards them.

Many other gentlemen addressed the meeting, among whom may be mentioned Robert Heywood, Esq., and Mr. David Shaw, as well as the Secretary. Some of the ministers and others, who had to walk a considerable distance to the train, had to leave early, and thus deprived the meeting of their services. But what was deficient in numbers, was compensated by the spirit and eloquence of those who attended; and it was generally remarked that a more instructive and agreeable meeting had never taken place in the district. The autumn meeting was appointed to be held at Bury, on Thursday, October 5, when the services are expected to be conducted by Revds. W. Probert and F. Baker.

THE WESTERN UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN UNION.

The half-yearly meeting of this Union was held at Bath, on Wednesday, May 3rd. In the hope that many friends would be induced to come from Bristol and other places in the neighbourhood, it was arranged to have the service at the chapel at three o'clock in the afternoon. The introductory part of the service was conducted by the Rev. Edwin Chapman, and a very earnest and awakening sermon was preached by the Rev. William Forster, of Kentish Town, London, from Zechariah xiv. 9—"And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one." There was more than usual interest connected with Mr. Forster's preaching at Bath, from the circumstance that three or four years ago he had preached with great acceptance there at Argyle chapel (Mr. Jay's); and a considerable number of the congregation were at that time anxious that Mr. Forster should be invited to become co-pastor with Mr. Jay, and ultimately his successor. Some of the Argyle congregation attended the service on this occasion at the Unitarian chapel.

In the evening, a tea-meeting was held in the banquetting room at the Guildhall, at which there were nearly 300 persons present, including friends from Bristol, Trowbridge, Bridgwater, Taunton, Honiton and Bridport, as well as some members of orthodox congregations in Bath. The ministers present were, the Rev. Wm. Forster; the Rev. W. James and Rev. J. Panton Ham, of Bristol; Rev. Jerom Murch and Rev. W. J. Odgers, of Bath; Rev. Edwin Chapman, Rev. S. A. Steinthal, Rev. W. A. Jones, Rev. W. Rowlinson, Rev. J. L. Short and Rev. Archibald M'Donald. After tea, a thanksgiving hymn was sung. The Rev. Jerom Murch was then unanimously requested to take the chair, and he contributed much to the pleasantness and usefulness of the meeting, by the part which he took in its proceedings. He first adverted to the more immediate object which had brought so many friends together, and then briefly touched on the various topics which would be presented for consideration in the course of the evening. He then called on the Secretary, the Rev. Wm. James, to read the report, which gave a detailed account of the operations of the Union during the preceding half-year. On the motion of the Rev. Archibald M'Donald, seconded by the Rev. Wm. Rowlinson, the report was unanimously received and adopted.—The Rev. E. Chapman then proposed a resolution, expressing the warmest thanks of the meeting to the Rev. William Forster for his very earnest and powerful sermon—heartfelt sympathy with him in his struggles and sacrifices in the cause of truth, and best wishes for his future usefulness and happiness. This resolution was seconded by T. Colfox, Esq., of Bridport, and responded to by Mr. Forster in a very interesting address, in which he described his gradual change of opinion, and the sacrifices to which it led; his retiring from a large and attached congregation, and from the beautiful church which they had erected for him; and his preaching in a humbler building the faith which he had once considered unscriptural and dangerous. He expressed entire satisfaction, however, at the course which he had adopted, looked forward with cheering hope to the future, and encouraged the friends and advocates of that truth which is now despised, to labour earnestly and zealously for its promotion, assured that in due season they will "reap, if they faint not."—

As this was the first meeting of the kind that had been held in Bath since the Rev. W. J. Odgers had settled there, the next resolution presented to him a cordial welcome, in the name of the Union, as well as of the Bath congregation. This resolution was proposed by Mr. Green and seconded by Mr. Jolly, who expressed their great satisfaction at the settlement of Mr. Odgers as their minister. In reply, Mr. O. thankfully acknowledged the kind welcome which had been thus accorded to him, and the very friendly spirit which had been evinced towards him ever since he had come to reside in that city.—The Rev. S. A. Steinthal, of Bridgwater, next proposed a resolution, expressing deep sympathy with those who had laboured hard in the search after truth, and who had suffered in its defence; and who, although they might not be immediately associated with the Unitarian body, were one with us on the most important points of Christian doctrine. The Rev. J. L. Short, in seconding this resolution, adverted particularly to those "signs of the times" which were favourable to the progress of the pure doctrines of the gospel; especially those indications presented by the most valuable portion of the literature of the present day, and the principles on which social reforms had been effected. The resolution was responded to by the Rev. J. Panton Ham, of Bristol, who expressed the pleasure it gave him to be present on such an occasion, and his general accordance with Unitarians in religious opinion. Christopher Thomas, Esq., the Treasurer of the Lewin's Mead congregation, expressed, on behalf of the friends from Bristol, the interest which they had felt in the proceedings of the evening, and their readiness to co-operate with the Bath congregation in all efforts for the promotion of their common cause. The hymn, "Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing," was then sung, and a prayer by the Rev. W. Forster concluded this very interesting meeting.

LIBERATION OF RELIGION FROM STATE-PATRONAGE AND CONTROL.

The Council of the Society formed for this object held its annual sitting at Radley's Hotel, London, on Wednesday, May 3rd. The report of the Executive Committee congratulated the Society's friends on its improving financial position, and at the increasing facilities afforded by public events. The ecclesiastical census had demonstrated the superiority of religious institutions unpatronized and uncontrolled by the State, and the facts of the case had therefore been widely circulated. For transacting the Society's Parliamentary business, a Parliamentary sub-committee had been formed, having as its chairman Dr. Foster, Professor of Jurisprudence at University College, and the ecclesiastical questions constantly debated in Parliament had kept it in full work. It had defeated the Stoke Newington Church Bill—had supported Mr. Fagan's motion against "ministers' money," and, on its defeat, had opposed to the utmost the Ministerial Bill, in the divisions on which 160 Liberal members had voted against the Government. They objected to the Marquis of Blandford's Episcopal and Capitular Estates Bill, as forestalling surplus funds which should be available as a substitute for church-rates; and also to the Colonial Clergy Disabilities, as involving the danger of establishing the Church of England in the Colonies. They had initiated a movement for the abolition of university tests, and already about 400 petitions, with nearly 20,000 signatures, had been presented, and it was hoped that Mr. Heywood's clause would be carried. They had afforded legal and other assistance in the numerous church-rate contests which had taken place since the Braintree decision—contests which shewed that opposition to taxation for religious purposes was rapidly extending, and that without waiting for legislative measures, church-rates could be practically abolished in the parishes. The treasurer's report shewed that the income for six months nearly equalled that of previous years, and that the treasurer had nearly £400 in hand. Resolutions were passed by the Committee on the various topics of the report, several animated discussions taking place, but entire unanimity prevailing. Mr. Morley, Mr. Miall. M.P., Mr. Crossley, M.P., Rev. J. Burnet and Rev. J. H. Hinton, were among those who took part in the proceedings.

The Fishmongers' Company have lately resolved to admit students of University College and King's College, London, to the benefit of some of their exhibitions of £20 a-year, hitherto enjoyed only by students of Oxford and Cambridge.